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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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Dakota Dan uttered a yell of triumph, then away he went, reloading his rifle as he galloped along.

OLD DAN RACKBACK, The Great Extarminator; OR, THE TRIANGLE'S LAST TRAIL.

BY OLL COOMES,

Author of "Dakota Dan," "Happy Harry," "Idaho Tom," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS OLD MAN'S SHOT.

DOWN across the plains of Dakota from its source among the Black Hills, wound Beaver Creek, a tributary to the Big Cheyenne river. Like a mere thread of silver it flashed and sparkled in the sunlight as it crept softly on toward the parent stream across the bosom of the great brown ocean of prairie. Now and then its continuity was broken by clumps of cottonwood and pine trees, that were interspersed over the plain and along the valleys like oasis in the desert, but, darting through these, it went murmuring silently onward, with the secret of its golden fount buried in its bosom.

To this stream, and at a point upon its shores known as Lone Tree Grove, we call the attention of the readers.

It was a warm, balmy, dreamy October day. Soft and mellow shone the sun's rays through the blue ethereal depths of "Indian Summer." The plain was brown and sear. Autumnal frosts had sapped the life from that great ocean of verdure and robbed it of its emerald hue. The tall, graceful cottonwoods bristled in their nakedness, and their fallen robes rustled ominously at their feet. Only the pines retained a vestige of the summer gone, for they still were green.

The day had been unusually still. Scarcely a breath of air was stirring; not a bird chirped in the little grove of cottonwoods—not even an insect's droning wing broke the foreboding spell of the hour and place. Solitude and silence reigned supreme; but however sacred they may have been, they were soon to be broken in upon by profane and unholy sounds.

The far-off report of a rifle swelled suddenly and sullenly across the plain, and the eye turning in the direction whence it came, would have seen a tiny cloud appear against the misty blue of the northern horizon. It would have discovered that it was a dust cloud rising from the earth, and at the same time the ear would

have heard the sound of human voices rising from out its envining depths. For a while the cloud appeared to hang stationary upon the air, gradually swelling in volume; but a keen eye would soon have discovered that this was due to the fact that the cloud was coming nearer and nearer on a straight line toward the grove—drifting slowly down the wind like a black sail. As it came still closer, it seemed to move faster, leaving a dark, dimming line hanging in the air along its trail; while clearer and more distinct came those excited cries from out its depths.

One unaccustomed to the prairies might have taken it for a whirlwind sweeping down from the north, freighted with the shrieks of storm-spirits; but one more experienced in the freaks of the wind and weather upon the plain, would have known better. In fact, no one would have been left long in doubt, for, out of the cloud, like spirits out of the gloaming, the proportions of fast-moving horsemen gradually unfolded themselves.

There were half a dozen or more of them in one body, while a few hundred yards in advance was one man, alone.

To a casual observer, the cause of the rapid riding would have soon become manifest; the one in advance was an Indian warrior, and in his arms he held the form of a young white girl, whose rescue was no doubt the object of the white men in pursuit. The captive was, to all appearance, lifeless. Her head hung backward over the encircling arm of her captor; her white face was upturned toward the blue sky, and a wealth of golden hair floated on the wind about her head and over the brawny, naked shoulders of the savage. If she was not dead, she had been relieved of all the horrors and agony of captivity by terror throwing the veil of unconsciousness over her mind.

The Indian was a Sioux, and notwithstanding the supposed friendliness of that tribe, he was in war-paint and looked like a fiend incarnate as he came thundering down the plain.

He bestrode a spirited horse whose sides were reeking with foam. He rode bareback and sat the animal as though immovably fixed upon it. His dark eyes glowed with a look of fiendish admiration as he glanced at the sweet, fair face of his helpless captive; then, as the shouts of his pursuers rang forth upon the air, a look of wild fear and determination contracted the muscles of his face, and he urged on his panting beast.

Of the six pursuers, all were white men, and no doubt the friends of the captive maid. The eldest of the party was a man past forty. He led in the pursuit with the rein in one hand and a rifle in the other. His head was bare, and his long, iron-gray hair floating back from the brow, distinctly revealed the profile of an intellectual face. He wore a blue woolen shirt and gray pants. Like his head, his feet were bare. He had evidently stripped himself for the race, as also had his companions. The horse he bestrode was an exact match for the one the savage was upon, and no doubt its mate.

The rest of the party were all young men, in whose faces shone the spirit of adventure. They were well armed, and each held a revolver in his hand, ready for instant use.

The pursuers were fully sixty rods behind the savage, yet appeared to be gaining steadily on him. They were using every exertion to increase the speed of their animals whose flanks were white with foam.

"Spur on, boys! spur on!" shouted Major Loomis, the leader of the pursuers; "we may head the red devil off on the banks of the Beaver, if he don't give us the slip by dodging into the grove. Spur on, boys! My poor child—my Amy must be saved!"

A shout of encouragement answered the father's urgent appeal and the men pressed their animals to their utmost speed.

On straight toward the creek—leaving the grove a few rods to the left—the savage made his headlong way.

On the very edge of the precipitous bank he drew rein, ran his eyes up and down the stream, then glanced backward at his pursuers, then across the plain on the opposite side of the creek, when a cry of triumph rang from his lips. He was encouraged—incited to this by sight of a band of horsemen sweeping down from the distant hills toward him. Full well he knew they were friends, although they were over a mile and a half away.

Dropping himself to the ground, he turned his animal loose, and clasping the maiden still tighter in his sinewy arms, he sprang down the bank, plunged into the water to his waist and floundered across to the opposite shore, gaining

the bank and the cover of a large cottonwood tree just as the pursuers came up on the other side.

"Dismount, boys, and follow on foot!" cried the half-distracted father, leaping from his animal's back. He saw that the high banks made it totally impossible to cross the stream on horseback.

In a moment every man was dismounted, and giving the horses into the care of two of their number, the others were about to leap down the bank when a man cried out:

"Stay, men! for God's sake, look yonder!" and he pointed across the stream toward the band of approaching horsemen whom all could see were Indians.

"Oh, my child! my poor child!" cried the major, clutching his brow and staggering backward, as if under the force of a terrific blow.

The savage still kept behind the tree on the opposite shore, fully a hundred yards away. The tree was forked and noted for its immense size. All over the territory it was known as the Lone Tree, and the grove near it, as Lone Tree Grove. It was a wide, branching cottonwood, under whose cool, Arcadian shadows had doubtless rested, from the excitement and fatigue of the chase, the braves of a dozen generations.

The tree forked within three feet of the ground, the prongs being about eighteen inches apart immediately above the crotch; and as the little band of pursuers stood gazing across the stream in speechless silence—knowing not what course to pursue—they saw the white face of Amy Loomis look toward them through the forks of the tree. She had recovered from her swoon.

Simultaneous with the discovery of her face, they heard the savage utter a yell of mocking triumph, then they saw his painted face lifted just above and back of the maiden's head.

In an instant Major Loomis threw his trusty rifle to his shoulder and drew a bead upon the savage, but before he could fire the cowardly villain covered his head behind that of the maiden, just daring to peer over her shoulder with one eye.

"Shoot! why don't the pale-face shoot?" yelled the bold, taunting devil, in tolerable English.

Major Loomis lowered his rifle. "I dare not," he said, his face as white as a sheet and his hand trembling; "I cannot slay my darling though she were better dead than a captive in that barbarian's power. Hardy, you are a capital shot: try the demon—you can see a portion of his head just above Amy's left shoulder."

"Why not charge upon him, major?" asked

one of the party; "we can get back here before that horde comes within range of us."

"It would be sure death to us, Frank. That fiend is trying to decoy—tempt us over there; and that he would not undertake were he not certain of our destruction. I dare say there are a hundred ambuscaded savages lying in the hollow, just back of the tree. Here, Hardy, try your hand. If you slay her, no blame shall rest upon you. If you kill the savage, maybe she can get behind the bank before the others reach her; then we can cover her retreat."

Hardy took his rifle and examined the priming. He was a youth of twenty, with a keen eye and steady nerve. Finally he faced the Lone Tree and raised the weapon. All could see that he trembled.

"Hold, thar, will ye, jist a holy second." It was a strange voice that spoke and Hardy lowered his rifle.

The party stood within a rod of the outskirts of Lone Tree Grove, from whence the voice had come, and as all turned toward it they saw a little clump of bushes slightly parted and the face of an old man—the most quaint, odd and comical-looking face imaginable—peering through upon them. Our friends were completely astonished at sight of it, and the first impulse was to laugh, but the significant shake of a long, bony finger enjoined silence upon all as effectually as though they had been stricken speechless.

"Step this way, will ye, major?" again said the old man, crooking his finger, and motioning Loomis toward him, with rapid movements of the hand.

Loomis cautiously approached him, at the same time demanding:

"Who are you, and what do you want?"

"I'm an ole subject of anatomy, what takes to shootin' Ingins jist as nateral as water runs down hill; and, stranger, seein' that gal, be she your darter or not, is in an excruciatin' deeficility, s'pose you allow me to administer to that red-skin. I can see the blaze of the devil's eye jist above her shoulder, and I think I can spile that optic if any man this side of creation can."

Major Loomis glanced at the slender form of the old man, in whose movements there seemed the falter of age, and in whose hand there was a perceptible tremor. His eyes, also, seemed dimmed by the use of time, and altogether there was nothing in the looks of the aged specimen of humanity to warrant the escape of the captive alive, should her father allow him a shot at the red-skin. His rifle was also one of the oldest pattern, the stock extending full length of the long barrel. Just in front of the guards the stock was worn nearly in two by long usage.

"I want to rescue my child, not slay her," said Loomis, in a rather negative tone.

"Then I'll try the red-skin a whet, stranger. The crack of my rifle will announce his arrival at the gates of purgatory," and the old borderman raised his rifle, and leveled it at the little patch of the red-skin's face, just visible above the captive's shoulder.

For fully half a minute he held the weapon at an aim. Loomis held his breath, for he saw that the rifle trembled. He was afraid to speak, for fear of disturbing the man at the wrong instant. To his surprise, however, the old man lowered the piece without firing. He shut his eyes tightly and kept them closed for several moments. Meanwhile, he worked his fingers first upon one hand then the other, as if to relieve them of a cramp.

"I'm a leetle shaky, stranger, to what I used to was," he said. "My eyes don't reach out, either, as well as they did once; but the fact of it is, age is doin' the work for me. The day was when I axed no odds of any one, and, in fact, I have yit to find my equal."

As he concluded, he again raised his rifle and leveled it upon the savage. Loomis saw that the long barrel was immovable. He saw it spit forth its deadly contents. He heard a death-yell, and, turning, saw that both the face of Amy and her captor had disappeared from the fork of the cottonwood. Beyond the tree a few feet he saw a red hand—the hand of the savage—beating the earth in the throes of death.

Out in the grove the shrill whinney of a horse, and the deep bark of a dog were heard to follow the clear ring of the old man's rifle.

Major Loomis uttered a cry of agony, and regardless of the consequence, he ran to the bank, sprang down the steep heights, and crossing the water, soon gained the opposite shore. A few steps carried him to where the savage and Amy lay upon the earth, the former dead—shot through the eye by the unerring rifle of the mysterious old borderman, the latter in a swoon.

The major took in the whole situation at a single glance, and, with a cry of thanks, he lifted the form of his child in his arms and made good his escape back to his friends, who hailed him with shouts of joy.

Although it has required some time for us to record the facts, all the events that transpired after the pursuers reached the creek up to the time of Amy's rescue, followed each other in such rapid succession that scarcely three minutes were occupied in the transaction of the whole. But by this time the savages approaching over the plain were within fifty rods of the creek, which fact admonished the whites of the necessity of a hasty retreat. So not a moment was lost in mounting, and putting their half-jaded animals in motion.

But, just as they started, Major Loomis happened to think of the old borderman, to whom the rescue of his daughter was doubtless owing, and whom, in the excitement of the moment, he had nearly forgotten. He stopped and turn-

ed toward the thicket, but the old man was not to be seen.

"Stranger, where are you?" called the major, but there was no response; and as there was not a moment to be lost, Loomis turned and rode rapidly away after his friends, with Amy in his arms.

A wild, savage yell behind, suddenly told them that the dead warrior had been found, and filled with renewed fears, the white men pressed their animals to their utmost speed.

CHAPTER II.

THE OUTLAWS AND THE VAGRANT.

Down from the direction of the Black Hills, at a wild, breakneck speed, galloped three horsemen, whose faces wore the flush and excitement of dangerous adventure. That it was a trio of reckless, daring fellows was evident from more than one fact. They were dressed in a peculiar kind of a uniform, highly ornamented with gold lace and trimmings. Two of them wore their hair shaven close to the scalp, while broad-brimmed hats surmounted their heads. The third man, and evidently the leader of the gang, wore his hair long as a woman's. He was a model of perfect manhood in form, but his features wore a look of sensuality and dissipation. His eyes were of a dark gray color, cold and fierce in expression. A heavy black mustache shaded his mouth, and this, with the long goatee that hung to his breast, gave him a fierce, piratical look. His hat was looped at one side and fastened with a blazing star of gold. A belt with a heavy gold buckle girded his waist. Silver-mounted revolver-butts peeped from their receptacles on his hips. In fact, there was a mine of gold distributed about the men and their outfit, which, of itself, was evidence of that vulgar pride so characteristic of the gambler and brigand.

The leader of this little band was known as Prairie Paul, the Pirate of the Gold Hills. Just what this appellation implied, only those who dwelt within reach of the prairie pirate could fully know. He was just from his hidden home among the fastnesses of the Black Hills, and straight toward a little clump of trees on the banks of the Beaver he held his way.

To reach the creek required but a few minutes' riding; then they turned, and entering the grove, rode into a little opening and drew rein.

Prairie Paul gazed around him as though he expected to find some one there; but being disappointed in this, he dismounted and burst into a stormy passion.

"Not an infernal red-skin or white-skin here yet, and we are an hour late. This is how that accursed White Bear has kept his word with me, and, by heavens, he shall make amends for it with his life blood!"

"Perhaps our not being on time, captain," said one of his companions, "accounts for the white chief's absence? He may have come and gone again."

"We're not an hour late."

"I know, captain; but a red-skin is a great stickler for such things—always punctual."

"Blasphemy! a red-skin that is so particular. I hate such dramatic precision in any man. Why, even the inexorable law of our land is less stringent. If we were to have been here at precisely one o'clock to attend a tribunal of justice, it would have been one o'clock until it were two."

"Well, we can wait awhile, and see what turns up. Perhaps White Bear is late as well as we are, and will yet put in an appearance?"

With a muttered oath, the captain threw himself upon the ground, and hitched his animal to a tree. His two companions followed his example; then the three threw themselves upon the sward beneath the shadows of a majestic tree.

"I am afraid something has gone wrong with White Bear," said Captain Paul, "else he would have been here ere this."

"Perhaps he failed in carrying out his plans for the capture of the hunter's daughter. Her friends may have given him a reception that materially changed his programme. I'll bet you that old Major Loomis is no numb-skull on the prairie if he roused all through the Pike's Peak campaign, as our spy informed us that he did."

"If a dozen hunters can whip a hundred well-armed red-skins, I think the latter had better exchange their weapons for their wives' petticoats, and let the women take the warfare."

"Well, but you know, my dear Paul, that sometimes a very small number can whip quite a force. For instance, take that Niobrara affair in which a dozen men knocked the trotters from under more than a cool hundred red-skins and—prairie regulators."

"Curse that affair!" exclaimed the outlaw chief, starting as though pierced by a dagger; "haven't I told you never to mention that again!"

"Of course, but then it comes so handy by way of illustration, that, to save me, I couldn't help touching upon the matter. You're so sensitive, captain. You had ought to have been a woman."

"Tom, you like to twist me about my meanness," replied the captain, "but, man, I'd give a quart of precious dust to see a more wicked, heartless scoundrel on the face of the globe than your honorable self—*you*, Tom Jackson."

"After all, captain, what has either of us done so terribly criminal?"

"Ah! drawing in your horn, now, ain't you?" laughed the captain. "Of course, you've never done anything wrong, you sweet-scented angel. Oh, no! I reckon you don't know you are trespassing this minute on the Sioux reservation—running a gold mine of your own in the very heart of the forbidden ground? I reckon you don't know you are preparing yourself for the gallows by inciting peaceably inclined red-skins to deeds of—"

"Captain, who's doing all this talkin'? Moreover, who's digging all this gold? doing all this trespassing—all this devilry in general?"

"Well, joking aside," said the captain, calmly, "we haven't done any direct meanness for some time, unless keeping on the good side of the red-skins might be considered naughty. It's true, we used to relieve the Pike's Peakites of some of their surplus pickings, and now and then a horse; but that confounded Union Pacific railway busted our cruising along the overland and sent us herewards. And, I must say, it has been a good thing for us, after all; for, by means of it, we rumbled across those rich pickings up among the Black Hills."

"Yes, besides it has kept us out of bloody mischief," replied Jackson; "but I'm of the candid opinion that we'll have to fight like turkeys if we hold the Black Hills gold secret much longer. If it is true that a scientific exploring party, under General Custer, is coming into the hills, it will be impossible for them to miss our rancho. Of course, they can't help but find gold, and then the news will bring a horde of miners swarming in upon us, and then—good-by, gold-pickings."

"But the government will not allow miners to enter the Indian reservation, don't you see?"

In case a few of them should come in, we could spur the Indians up to drive them out."

"It will be an easy matter for the government to effect a treaty that will open the hills to the world," the pirate chieftain responded. "I'll bet the train we are now figuring after is that of a private exploring party, headed for the interior of the hills. Of course, we are not going to molest them, nor provoke the Indians to anything that would bring a military chastisement upon them, for fear we might jeopardize our own precious heads."

"You're a philosopher, captain, a sage philosopher, and look at thing in a natural, philosophical way; and now, I—"

He did not finish the sentence, which was here cut short by a sudden movement of their animals, denoting alarm.

All bent their heads and listened. They heard the heavy tramp of hooved feet approaching. They started to their feet and gazed about them. The sorriest, saddest-looking spectacle imaginable burst upon their view. It was an old man, with a bent form, a thin, bearded face, a sharp, eagle-shaped nose, and a wide mouth—the whole forming a combination of the most ludicrous and comical kind. He was dressed in a suit half savage and half civilized, and carried an old, long-barreled rifle, whose stock was wrapped and tied with strings, evidently to keep it from parting company with its ancient friend, the barrel. He carried no other weapons, excepting a knife, that were visible upon his person.

This odd specimen of humanity was mounted upon a horse apparently more venerable and infirm than himself. It was caparisoned with a rope around the neck for a bridle, and an old Indian blanket for a saddle. It was lame in one fore-leg, and halt in the two hind ones. It was apparently deaf and blind, and so old and infirm that it had lost all its animal instinct. It hobbled along, at times on three legs, with no little difficulty. And, to complete the outfit, a villainous-looking dog sneaked along, with head and tail down, at the horse's heels, looking as guilty as though he had just quitted a sheepfold.

To their surprise, the outlaws saw that the old trio was about to pass without seeing them, and so Prairie Paul called out:

"Hullo, there! whither away, my gay cavalier?"

The old man started quickly, and opening his half-closed eyes, gazed around him. The look upon his face, and the movements that accompanied it, provoked the freebooters into an outburst of laughter.

"Whoa, now!" exclaimed the old man, drawing sharply on the rope as he caught sight of the three men.

The horse came to a dead halt, and the wolfish cur at his heels crouched sulkily down, watching the outlaws suspiciously out of the corners of his bloodshot eyes.

"How do you do, old pilgrim?" shouted Prairie Paul, with a half-suppressed smile upon his lips.

"Hey!" asked the old man, leaning slightly forward and making an ear-trumpet of his hand.

"How are you, I say?" vociferated Prairie Paul, at the top of his brazen lungs.

"A leetle louder, please," was the startling response; "naught cold last night and my hearin's a leetle thick."

"I should think so," said Paul, in an undertone, then advancing to the old man's side, he fairly screamed in his ear, "A fine day this."

"Oh, yez—yez!" stammered the old fellow, "she's a good ole mare—a little thin just now; and then everybody don't call her a fine bay. Some say brown, some chestnut. She is a fine bay, though."

The outlaw captain swore furiously, while his two companions roared with laughter.

"This is the most hopeless case I ever run across," exclaimed Prairie Paul. "I'll make one more desperate effort. Who are you, old man?"

"Ben Franklin Adder's my name," replied the man, with a look that implied some doubt as to whether he had heard the question aright.

"Ben Franklin Adder," repeated the outlaw chief, musingly; "an appropriate name, I should think, for I have always heard that adders were deaf. But, to the old traveler, 'are you a hunter? or a scout? or what?'"

"Yes, oh, yes; I'm traveling up north to Iowa."

"Up north to Iowa? I'll be hanged if that doesn't beat anything I ever heard for lamentable ignorance! I'm inclined to think, boys, that B. F. Adder's brain, as well as his hearing, is affected. Look at that horse, and that comical looking cur, and that old rifle held together with strings. Isn't that an outfit for the plains of Dakota? Great Gehosophat! It would be a splendid subject for the artist of a comic almanac. See here, old pilgrim, Iowa is south-east of here, not north."

"Yez—yez," stammered Adder, "my nag's awful tired and fretful, and wusser than all, she's lame into one leg as a crow."

"The old vagrant!" blustered Captain Paul; "the case is a hopeless one, and I'll be cursed if I am going to split my lungs trying to converse with him."

The three outlaws turned aside and sat down again.

Ben Franklin Adder, seeing their movement, at once dismounted, and giving his mare the freedom of the reins, turned and sat down also. The animal hobbled away a few paces and began browsing among the shrubbery, while the dog, crouching near, slept complacently with one eye open.

"Are you a hunter, old man?" one of the outlaws again ventured to ask, placing his lips near the man's ears.

"Me? oh, no; I've been out to Platte river on a visit to my son, Tom Jefferson Adder. Tom's a big stock man out there, and a mighty smart boy, is that very Tom?"

"Takes after his father, I presume," yelled Prairie Paul.

The old man acknowledged the compliment with a bow of the head and a smile of thanks.

"He thinks you meant just what you said," remarked Jackson, in an undertone.

"Any news from out on the Platte?" roared Paul.

"Oh, yez, certainly; Tom Jefferson—that's my son—got one of the finest bulls in America to-day. He calls him the Duke of Coronation. He's imported, is that bull—brought from Texas. Lordy, but you'd ort to see him; he's so slick a fly'd scot right off his back. It's a fact; I see'd a bushel of dead flies and musketeers laying on the ground whar 'Slick sides,' as I called the bull, had stood. They'd lit on him and slid off and broke their necks. Oh, Moses! you'd ort to ride over to Tom Jefferson's some day and see that bull, strangers. And then he's some fine hoss-critters, too, that are reguler squakers. Tom's a great feller for fine stock."

"Just like his venerable sire, again," said Paul to his comrades, at the same time pointing in a significant manner at the old mare and sneaking cur.

"The old fellow had better be in the lunatic asylum than wandering around here on the plains of Dakota in such a plight," said one of the outlaws, sympathetically.

Further words were here cut short by the dog starting up, with a loud bark.

The old man sprung to his feet and turning upon the dog exclaimed, savagely:

"Git down thar, Beamer! keep still, thar; do you want to tear something up, ye voracious critter?"

The outlaws roared with laughter at the ludicrous figure cut by the decrepit old man and his dog; but the next moment their attention was drawn aside by sight of a number of mounted Indians coming into the grove from the east, directly toward them.

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT "EXTARMINATOR."

The old tramp, Ben Franklin Adder, was, for the time being, forgotten by the three outlaws, who directed their attention to the newcomers.

The savages, of whom there were six under a young chief called Fast-foot, rode up and at once dismounted, which act was proof of itself that they were there to meet Prairie Paul by appointment.

As the last of the party rode up a look of bitter disappointment overspread the face of the outlaw captain. This, however, soon gave way to anger and indignation, and approaching Fast-foot he demanded—speaking the Indian's dialect:

"Where is the white chief, White Bear?"

"He is far away from here," replied the young chief.

"Why has he not kept his appointment and met me here?"

"His luck has been bad. He promised to meet the pale-face captain here with the white lily that blooms in the camp of the hunters now crossing the plains in white-topped lodges that move on wheels."

"Well!" demanded the freebooter, impatiently.

"He attacked the train. He sent Cuning Fox into the emigrants' lodges," continued the chief. "The Fox stole one of their horses, and then the white maiden. On the horse he fled with his prize; but the friends of the maidens pursued him, and at the Lone Tree Grove he abandoned his horse and waded the creek. Behind the Lone Tree he concealed himself to wait the approach of White Bear, who was coming down the plain. But before he reached the creek Cuning Fox was killed, and the white lily was carried back by her friends. In the pursuit White Bear's horse fell and hurt him badly. He cannot ride. He waits the orders of the young captain. He will yet keep his promise. He wants the young captain to make new appointments."

Prairie Paul stroked his mustache fiercely. The cloud upon his face grew darker. He muttered a savage oath; then for a minute or more he paced to and fro beneath the trees, his eyes bent to the ground in deepest thought. Finally he turned to the chief and asked:

"Can I not see White Bear?"

"You cannot. He is wounded, and at a place where the presence of the white captain would arouse suspicion. If the Sioux get their annuities, they must keep on good terms with the Great Father at Washington."

Again was the prairie freebooter silent. It was evident from this conversation that a portion of the Sioux tribe was carrying on a series of depredations, in connection with the outlaws, which they wished to keep secret from the main authorities of their tribe, as well as from the agents of the general government.

Outlaws of civilized society have no trouble in finding plenty of followers among the savages, and the two elements of outlawry together generally manage to keep the Indians in trouble with the government.

"Have you heard," Fast-foot finally continued, "that the great general of the pale-faces, with many mounted soldiers, is coming into the reservation?"

"I have heard rumors to that effect," replied the captain, "but will the young men of the Sioux tribes allow them to escape alive with the secret of the hidden wealth of the Black Hills? Will they let a handful of soldiers go away with the news that will bring thousands and thousands of miners in to drive you from your hunting-grounds?"

"What else can they do?" asked the chief, seriously.

"Ah, Fast-foot! you can prevent it; you can destroy them all if you will. You know all the hiding-places among the hills, and the rocks. You could conceal yourselves there and as the soldiers pass shoot them down with your long-range rifles. Then their fine horses and equipments would be yours."

Fast-foot was silent and thoughtful. It was quite evident that he was favorable to the outlaw's suggestions, and was weighing the matter in his mind. Prairie Paul knew the weak points of the savages, and usually attacked them there in such a manner as was sure to carry the day. He was a systematical rogue, deep and cunning enough to keep the "pot boiling" in the Indian camp all the time, and yet escape identity as the general "fireman."

Meanwhile, the rest of the savages and the two outlaws had turned their attention to Ben Franklin Adder. Urged on by the whites, the red-skins became rather demonstrative toward the old borderman and his animals. The mare and dog, however, were inclined to be a little cross and resentful, the former sne and and the latter growled a savage threat. But the simple-minded old man accepted all as one would flatter compliments.

Prairie Paul finally sat down and taking a memoranda-book from his pocket tore out a leaf, upon one side of which he sketched, with a pencil, a miniature map. On the other side he wrote in cipher an explanation to the map. When it was completed he folded it carefully, and, handing it to Fast-foot, said:

"Here, chief, is a document which I want you to give to White Bear. He alone can read it. Guard it with your life, Fast-foot, for it is the key to the Gold Hill's secret and our future success."

"Fast-foot will not forget," replied the young chief, and removing his moccasins he placed the paper carefully away inside of it, then replaced the covering on his foot. Ugh! he exclaimed, with an air of satisfaction, "safe there—nobody find him now." Then, turning to his warriors he continued: "Fast-foot is mounted upon a fleet horse, and will depart at once for the lodge of White Bear. My braves can follow at will."

So saying, he advanced to where his pony was hitched, and mounting it he rode rapidly away—out of the grove and across the plain.

For a moment all eyes followed the young chief's rapid departure, but, when he had disappeared from view, attention naturally gravitated toward Ben Franklin Adder. To the surprise of all, the old vagrant had mounted his mare and was about to depart.

"Hullo there, old philosopher! are you going to leave us?" yelled the outlaw chief.

"Yez—yez—going," said the old fellow, and his mare started off at a limp, and the dog took his place at her heels.

"Hold on a moment; don't tear yourself off like a hurricane!" said the pirate.

The Indians started toward the old man, but he straightened himself up and uttered a clear, ringing laugh that fairly astonished the enemy. It even seemed to have a magical effect upon his animals. The mare raised her head, opened her eyes and sniffed the air as if with affright; while the dog pricked up his ears and barked and capered around uneasily.

"Captain," said Tom Jackson, in a quick voice, "that old vagrant has been deceiving us. He is not the fool he pretends to be."

"I believe it, Tom," replied Prairie Paul; then to the old man he continued, drawing his revolver: "Hold! stand! or I'll fire."

"Se—at, Patience!" yelled the old borderman, and that instant the lameness of the mare vanished, and like a dart she shot away through the woods.

Bang! went the outlaw's revolver, and it was immediately followed by the clash of a dozen other shots. But the old man escaped them all unharmed.

"To horse, men! we've been duped!" cried Prairie Paul, vaulting into the saddle.

The next moment all were mounted and thundering away in pursuit of the cunning old vagabond. They emerged from the woods to find the fugitive some sixty rods away, and with a yell they lashed their animals to their utmost speed.

The race became one of fearful interest, especially to the pursuers, for they found, after a mile chase, that they were not gaining a foot upon the fugitive, who, ever and anon, turned his head and swinging his cap in the air, hurled back yells of defiance. And at length he came to sudden, dead halt, and facing toward the pursuers raised his rifle and fired. Prairie Paul's horse sunk dead under him, and his friends, believing he was killed himself, drew rein and went back.

The old man on the prairie uttered a yell of triumph, then away he went, reloading his rifle as he galloped along.

Tom Jackson dismounted and gave his horse to the infuriated captain, who, mounting, dug his roweled heels into the animal's sides, and again started in wild pursuit of the enemy. But, no sooner were they all fairly under way, than the fugitive again whirled his animal toward the foe, and, raising his rifle, fired. Again Prairie Paul's horse sunk dead under him, and again the chase was interrupted. The outlaw's fury knew no bounds. He cursed with impotent rage; he cursed himself, his companions and the author of his rage. The second outlaw dismounted and gave up his horse to his master, when the chase was again resumed.

The fugitive soon put a safe distance between himself and pursuers, when, for the third time, he drew rein, faced about and fired at the foe. This time a savage uttered a frightful scream and reeling upon his horse finally rolled lifeless to the ground; while the pony, maddened by the scent of the blood, that spurted from the bullet-hole in his master's naked breast upon his withers, dashed away over the plain.

The savages all drew rein to assist their fallen friend; but Prairie Paul cared nothing for the savage, and pressed on in hot pursuit, never once thinking that he might be placing himself at the old borderman's mercy. Vengeance alone filled his wrathful breast.

Before he could get his rifle reloaded and fairly under way, the fugitive found that the outlaw-chief was within fifty yards of him. But, speaking to his mare, she shot away and soon widened the distance between them.

Prairie Paul drew his revolver and banged away in rapid succession at the old fellow, but without visible effect.

The Indians and two outlaws were now far behind—even hidden from view behind a swell in the plain. Prairie Paul was the only one pursuing, and not until he saw the old man draw rein and turn toward him with uplifted rifle, did he comprehend the foolhardiness of his efforts. To make the best of a bad situation, he checked his animal and dropped himself in the tall grass at its feet. But, at the same instant, the old man's rifle rung out, and his horse fell dead at his side.

Something akin to fear now seized upon the outlaw. Quickly he sprung to his feet, expecting to see the deadly, terrible old enemy come charging back upon him; but he was happily disappointed, and his fears assumed a different form, as he discovered the enemy calmly seated astride his mare, reloading his rifle with a song froid that was audacious. They were not over fifty yards apart, and Prairie Paul would have given his right hand for one shot at the old trickster with his own trusty rifle. But alas! he had left his rifle behind, and every chamber of his revolver was empty. He was completely at the man's mercy. Judge of his terrible fury when he heard the provoking old sinner shout forth in clear, ringing tones:

"Good shootin' that, wher'n't it, captin'g? I ain't as deaf as I war, am I? I ain't a fool, by a long shot, be it! And Patience, my mare here, and Humility, my dog thar, are not so slouchy arter the sound facts are known, are they? Ho! ho! ho! captin'g; do you know what you've been foolishin' with? Do you know you've got yerself into an excoosiatin' d-d-eckleity! Do you know you're in the vicinity of an yartquakel—a tornado!—a cholera plagues! I are ole Dan sackback, I are. But take me, and Patience, my mare here, and Humility, my dog thar, and then, captin'g—the have ole Dakota Dan, the great Triangle—the great red-skin extarminator of the Nor-west! We've just come up, fresh as a Johnny-jump-up, from New Mexico. But now, we're off for the Gold Hills—a boom-in'; so by-by, captin'g, and turning his animal's head northward, old Dakota Dan galloped away over the plain in the direction taken by the young chief, Fast-foot, leaving the outlaw chief standing alone on the prairie, cursing with impotent rage.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VULTURE'S QUEST.

For several moments Prairie Paul stood motionless upon the plain, his terrible feeling of vengeance seeking expression in words alone, as he watched the author of his troubles galloping away. He was perfectly helpless now, and completely at the mercy of the old man, though the latter seemed to have no designs upon his life, but kept straight on northward, and soon disappeared behind a swell in the great ocean of grass.

The savages on horseback, and the two outlaws on foot, finally made their appearance in the distance, moving slowly. They had the dead savage in charge, consequently were unable to move faster than a walk. As soon as they saw Prairie Paul standing alone on the grassy waste, they knew he had met with another difficulty, and so the two outlaws hurried forward and joined him.

"What now, captain?" asked one of the men, as they approached within speaking distance.

"Why, my brave Spartans, we're a trio of fools—blind idiots, that's what's the matter—was the savage response of the ill-humored freebooter.

"Not so bad as that, I hope."

"Yes, if any difference, worse; we've been blubbering like a pack of fools around one whom we took for a wandering lunatic, when, come to find out, we're the lunatics. That old wretch is one of the most noted and daring scouts and rangers on the western plains. That very Benjamin Franklin Adder is old Dakota Dan, and you know who and what that man is."

"By hearsay, I do; but you must be mistaken, cap. Old Dakota Dan left the north some four or five years ago."

"Well, s'pose he didn't? couldn't he come back again after he'd killed all the fools in Texas and New Mexico? And didn't he have the audacity to set out yonder on that old crow-bait of a flying-shuttle and tell me that he was just up from New Mexico like a spring rose-bud?"

"Hounds of fury!" exclaimed Jackson, in astonishment.

"Yes, you see it's the truth—we're the fools," continued Paul. "All that deafness; all that coning about his son's fine stock so elaborately polished off, until I could see that each of you had a blooded horse in your mind's eye; and I dare say, those strings on that old, unerring rifle, were all salt to catch us with. And, magnificent sheepsheads that we were, we played right into his hand. Of course, the conversation that occurred between us and Fast-foot will be heralded to the ears of the military, and then, good-by Gold Hills! The chances are that Doc Prince, and his party, have fallen into that old scavenger's clutches, else they'd been around before this."

"Well, I'm completely astonished," averred Jackson.

"Yes, and you'll be more astonished before we get through with that old prairie vagrant. Now, here we are, three pretty birds in full plumage, strutting around out here twenty miles from no place, with our wings clipped, as it were, and smarting under the blow dealt us by that infernal outfit of deception—Dakota Dan."

"You should feel thankful, captain, that he did not put a bullet through your corporosity."

"That he did not is the surprise of the day, for I was completely at his mercy. But I presume he wants to use me for a fool again, I was so cheap this time. But hereafter, count me poison on prairie vagrants."

Tom Jackson and his companion laughed heartily at their captain's savage discomfiture. Finally one of them asked:

"Well, this won't pay; what shall we do?"

"Plod gayly back to the hills, like festive pilgrims," said Paul, sarcastically. "Shades of Solomon! won't the boys just burst their boots a-laughing when they see us come marching into camp, afoot? But if the pill is bitter, we've got to swallow it down; so come—let's be going away, my gay cavaliers."

So saying, the three men began their slow march across the plain, going in the direction taken by Dakota Dan. A walk of many weary miles was before them and as they moved along they discussed the events of the day, in bitter tones.

They had journeyed half a dozen miles or more when the restless, roving eyes of Tom Jackson caught sight of a number of dark objects away off northward above the horizon. They were buzzards, and to the experienced plainmen—as were the outlaws—there was a significance in the presence of the birds not to be overlooked. The three men knew that something on the plain beneath the birds attracted their attention.

"They're not flying straight, you see," said Paul, "but are rising and falling in spiral circles. Now, there is either some carrion there on the prairie, or else they are hovering along, vulture-like, upon the trail of a band of Indians or whites. If the former, it may be White Bear's band, but if the latter, it may be a party of soldiers, and the birds are following in hopes of feasting on dead horse or—"

"If they'll just flap their somber wings down this way, they'll find the carcasses of some very fine horses already prepared," observed Jackson, facetiously.

Prairie Paul's brow darkened and he growled savagely under his mustache at this reminder of his loss.

The three moved carefully forward, keeping as much as possible in the lowlands, and watching closely the movements of the vultures in the air. And as they continued on they found that the birds maintained a single position over the plain.

Other winged scavengers had appeared in the air, miles behind the outlaws, but these they knew had been attracted there by the carcasses of their slain horses, and so they experienced no uneasiness from that source. But they were considerably puzzled over the cause of the attraction of the birds before them, and pressed onward with extreme caution.

Nick o' the Night: OR, THE BOY SPY OF '76. A CENTENNIAL STORY.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH.

CHAPTER VII.

A CHANGE OF RESIDENCE.

It was morning when Hugh Latimer recovered from the effects of the opiate, and left his couch.

His sleep had been disturbed by weird dreams, and his face looked pale and haggard. The events of the night just passed—the capture of Colonel Holly, and the branding of Helen as a traitress—did not recur to him when he opened his eyes and began to collect his thoughts.

His first act was the summoning of a colored servant to his room.

"Has the colonel risen yet?"

The eyes of the black suddenly distended, and filled with a ludicrous look of incredulity. "De cunnel, massa! Why, hab you forgotten dat de Swamp Fox done took 'im away last night?"

The next moment Hugh Latimer's mind was itself again, and with an exclamation of chagrin he waved the slave aside and was alone once more.

"Yes, yes!" he hissed, clenching his hands till the nails bruised the whitened palms. "That accursed Marion did ride down here last night, and rob me of my guests. He always comes like a thief in the night, for he never fights like a Christian and gentleman. To-night we were to have fallen on him in his lair; but the game is up now. What will they say of this disaster at Dorchester?" The Tory asked himself, after a brief pause. "I promised King that Colonel Holly should deliver the Swamp Fox into his hands. They may think that I am a rebel, sailing under false colors. I must go in person to the fort, and clear my skirts of suspicion. To some case may look dark against me, but I swear that King George can boast of no adherent more loyal to his crown than Hugh Latimer!"

He uttered a truth that none who knew him dared to question.

After awhile he left his chamber and hastened to the eastern wing of the mansion where his knuckles rapped lightly, but with a sign of impatience, on a door.

Presently he heard a step beyond the portal, the knob of which was soon turned.

"It is you, sister?"

"No, it is I," answered the Tory. "Helen, are you dressed?"

He was answered by the opening of the door, and he stood face to face with Helen, whose fair cheeks were paler than usual.

She retreated involuntarily from the look he cast upon her, as he stepped across the threshold, and shut the door with an angry sweep of the hand.

"I want to talk with you!" he said, and as the last word dropped from his lips he seized her arm and drew her toward him. "Helen Latimer, you have disgraced the man who has provided a shelter for your head since the days of your babyhood. You have played the role of a spy beneath the roof of Azalea; you have furnished the rebel brigands with valuable information, and last night your double dealing culminated in a new disgrace to the royal cause. I ought to turn you over to the tender mercies of Colonel Balfour, or, Brutus-like, make my slaves punish you as you deserve in my presence. I curse the day that brought you into the world, spy, traitress, despoiler of the name of Latimer!"

His eyes flashed like the orbs of the maddened tiger, and while the hot epithets of his last sentence fell from his lips, he shook the young girl till her teeth chattered, like those of an ague-stricken person.

"Last night!" Helen Latimer cried, when she found that she could use her tongue. "What did I do to bring about the surprise of Colonel Holly?"

"What did you not do, you spying girl?" cried the Tory. "You communicated with that young imp of Satan, Nick o' the Night; you told him that Holly and his men were here!"

"I dare you to the proof!" Helen answered, with an air of triumph. "I did not communicate with him on the subject. He discovered the game by the assistance of one Hugh Latimer."

The Tory started, and his grip tightened on the girl's arm.

"No lies, girl!" he cried, threateningly. "You shall have none," was the firm reply.

"Night before last you rode from Dorchester with Captain Clayton. While in the avenue of oaks, you talked about Colonel Holly's expedition. You were overheard."

"By whom?" he asked, with a sneer.

"By Nick o' the Night!"

The next instant Helen's arm was released.

"Was that spying boy so near?"

"He might have touched you with his sword."

"How did you learn this?"

She hesitated, and her eyes, beneath his accusing look, fell to the floor.

"Tell me!" he cried, springing forward, "who told you all this?"

She looked up, with a proud light in her eyes that made him angrier than ever.

"The boy himself."

"Nick o' the Night?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Last night."

"Where?"

"Sir, I am not obliged to answer inquiries I deem impertinent," she replied.

"Sir, to me!" hissed the Tory, maddened beyond control. "Sir, to your father, whose English heart is wrung by your dastardly betrayal of the cause of his king! Helen Latimer, I could fling you against your wall and crush out your rebellious life. But I will put an end to the rebellious plans that have been matured beneath my roof. The day of your treason has drawn to a close. I have put up with it until driven to the verge of the precipice of ruin; I must turn and strike it down to save the honored name of Latimer. I command you not to stir from this house to-day. My men will watch you—my men whom your beauty and your gold cannot bribe. Helen Latimer, I wish you slept with your mother, whose grave is unmarked because it is unknown!"

The last words fell from his white lips with the sound of water dropping on red-hot steel, and his countenance was the incarnation of hate and madness.

Still it did not prevent the fair young object of his dislike from springing toward him as he turned on his heel, before the echoes of his final word had died in the room.

"My mother!" she cried; "tell me about my mother!"

Hugh Latimer, until this day I have never heard you speak of her. I have dreamed of her, and while I dreamed I felt gentle

fingers in my hair, and kisses on my forehead. I have longed to know of her. Tell me how old I was when Heaven robbed me of her love!"

"Her love!" hissed Hugh Latimer, turning suddenly upon the girl, who confronted him with outstretched arms. "Your mother never loved you. Helen Latimer, to the day of her death she hated you."

The young girl groaned.

"I will not believe you!" she cried. "You are torturing my heart with falsehood. But enough. If you will not tell me about her who gave me birth, you will not refuse to tell me if I ever had a brother?"

The Tory started like a man suddenly accused of a crime which had in secret been committed.

"Who told you to ask these questions?" he cried. "If you had a brother, what is it to you?"

"The satisfaction of knowing it. I now know that I had a brother."

"You had!" exclaimed the Tory; "but he is as dead as Chelsea!" and with the last word he turned for the second time and shut the door in her face.

"Nick's dream is more than a dream," Helen said before Hugh Latimer's feet had ceased to sound in the corridor. "I had a brother once; but he says that he is dead. Shall I believe him? He hated my mother! why, then, would he not lie about my brother?"

She walked to the couch from which she had lately risen, and threw herself upon it to brood in silence and with hidden face over the events of the last few moments.

As for the Tory, he went below, swallowed a hasty breakfast, and rode from Azalea unattended.

About noon he returned, and ordered the black hostler to saddle two horses.

"Put Helen's saddle on Chestnut," he said, then resigned his own steel into the servant's charge and entered the mansion.

Despite the Tory's efforts to remain composed, his nervousness betrayed him.

He directed his steps to Helen's boudoir, the door of which he opened without ceremony, and found the young girl embroidering at the window.

"Helen Latimer!"

She started at the sound of his voice, and the needle-work almost dropped from her hand.

"You are going to take a ride with me," he continued. "Ask no questions now, for I will not answer you; but put on your riding habit, and be at the block as soon as possible."

Then he disappeared, leaving the girl in a state of bewilderment, in which she confusedly tried to guess the destination of her coming journey.

With her mind full of conjectures, she donned a neat and somewhat costly riding habit, and met Hugh Latimer at the mounting-block at the edge of the porch below.

He greeted her with a smile that praised her dispatch, and without a word assisted her into the silken saddle on the back of Chestnut, her favorite horse.

"Where is your mistress, Bertha?" she asked a servant, who was looking on with wondering eyes.

"We cannot wait," the Tory said, tartly. "You will come back by and by, and then you will see Bertha often."

A moment later Hugh Latimer spoke to his horse, and rode from the mansion with Helen by his side.

He was morose and thoughtful, and the girl, fearful of causing an outburst of passion, did not speak. She felt that the present strange journey had resulted from the Tory's morning ride, and when they crossed a certain murmuring tributary of the Ashley, she began to believe that Fort Dorchester was her destination.

At last, as if to confirm her belief, the British flag greeted her vision, and half an hour later she entered at the Sally-port, and found herself observed and admired by the soldiers that comprised the garrison.

During the ride from Azalea she had not exchanged a single word with her conductor. But when they drew near to Colonel King's quarters she unsealed her lips.

"Are you not afraid to bring me here? I might tell Marion the strength and situation of the garrison!"

She spoke in a sarcastic tone, and there was a mischievous twinkle in her dark eyes.

"Afraid! No!" said the Tory, with a triumphant look, like a prisoner, suddenly burst his bonds.

"Helen Latimer, until I see fit to take you back to Azalea, Fort Dorchester is to be your home. You are a prisoner under the eye of Colonel King!"

The terrible truth flashed upon Helen's mind before he had finished.

She was a prisoner in a British fort!

A moment's silence followed the Tory's last triumphant sentence, and Helen was about to reply, when Colonel King was seen advancing toward them.

The commandant was clad in full uniform, and bowed with the grace of a cavalier to the girl who could not but admire his faultless form and features.

"Here is the rebel I spoke of this morning," said the Tory, smiling. "Miss Helen Latimer!"

CHAPTER VIII.

OLD ENEMIES WILL MEET.

HELEN LATIMER'S imprisonment was followed by a number of days devoid of exciting interest.

It is true that the red-coats chased partisans and vice versa; but nothing worthy of notice in the lives of several of our characters occurred.

Helen could not complain of ill treatment at the hands of Colonel King. He was a polite officer who had a family in England, and who showed his captive many little favors because she reminded him of his own youngest daughter. Still he was quite strict, but though watched by one so kind, with argus eye, Helen did not murmur.

A rumor of Nick o' the Night's death reached Dorchester several days after the girl's delivery over to the garrison.

Colonel King at first placed no credence in the report, and Jotham Nettleton, the dragon, laughed when he heard it. But, by-and-by circumstances gave coloring to the story which at length reached Helen Latimer's ears.

Couriers traversed the country between Orangeburg and Dorchester without molestation, and dispatches from Rawdon, who was concentrating his forces near Camden in the north, came through with safety. As if to confirm the reports, Colonel Holly and his men, paroled by Marion returned to the old town. They declared that the boy had not been seen for five days, and the colonel said that Marion feared that a hostile bullet had terminated his adventurous career.

"If he is dead, why don't his slayer come forward and proclaim his deed?" dragon Nettleton would exclaim. "I tell you, boys, that I don't believe a word of it, and to prove that he is living I will agree to hunt him up and enlighten you with the truth."

At last there remained in Dorchester but two persons who refused to believe the well-substantiated reports of the young partisan's death.

They were Helen Latimer and the dragon.

Lancaster Wingdon, who, as the reader will recollect, fired the shot that stretched Nick o' the Night on his horse's neck, visited the fort on the day that followed Helen's incarceration.

He was surprised to learn that Hugh Latimer had anticipated his own plan of carrying the young girl to the fort, for the purpose of preventing her from getting valuable information to the patriots, and he was pleased to know that the Tory had taken the matter into his own hands.

He gave credence to the rumors of his rival's death, but did not father the fatal moonlight shot.

As he came to Dorchester as Helen's lover, he did not wish her to know that he was responsible for the painful reports. By-and-by he could come out openly and receive praise for his deadly aim. He felt certain that his ball had wrought speedy death, and it was with difficulty that he could keep his triumph from Colonel King. But he was afraid to make that officer his confidante, and so he came often to the town and fort telling no one his secret.

During these visits he did not encounter Corporal Nettleton.

There existed a hatred between these two persons that increased as the days waned, and Colonel King looked at the young Tory's visits with much uneasiness. He feared that the two enemies would meet again, and that deadly blows would be the result. Therefore, he took care to keep Lancaster Wingdon at his headquarters during his brief sojourn at the fort, in order that he might not encounter the man who he hated with all the bitterness of the human heart.

The corporal despised the youthful scion of the Tory house. The epithets which he had bestowed burned in his heart, and he was but biding his time.

"He called me coward, and for that word I'll wring his neck!" the dragon said, time after time.

He did not open the flood-gates of his wrath to the commandant, but there were a few members of the garrison who knew how he longed to punish the young Tory. These were men who did not like Lancaster Wingdon, who, they were wont to say, was too cowardly to take up arms for the king.

Thus the reader has seen that the youth possessed enemies who fought for King George—men who hated him for his name and social station.

Dragon Nettleton was a brave man. He threw off his scarlet uniform, put aside his British sword and scoured the country in citizen's dress for Nick o' the Night. He rode alone down roads frequented by Sumter's troopers, and followed Marion's daring raiders across fields and over hills. Now and then he would ride into Dorchester where after a day's rest he would spring into the saddle, and ride forth intent upon solving the uncertainty that hung over Nicholas Brandon's fate.

The purport of Lancaster Wingdon's visits to Dorchester did not escape the corporal's penetration.

He saw that he came in the capacity of a lover, and that Helen did not return the adoration that he offered on the altar of her beauty.

"The girl don't like Tories, my young fellow," the trooper would often say. "In the private opinion of Corporal Nettleton of the Royal Horse she thinks much of that wild boy who they say is dead. I am of a mind to constitute myself her guardian just for the purpose of kicking that young king's man, for persecuting her with his presence."

One starlit night saw Jotham Nettleton's horse drinking in the middle of a ford.

The man that filled the saddle did not resemble the dragon.

He was clad in a countryman's shabby dress, and an uncouth sand-colored beard hid much of his face. He wore a sword whose blade had been fashioned from a saw by the strong arm of some patriot smith, and a rough-looking pistol stuck in a heavy leathern belt.

He looked like a partisan—a Tory—but despite his looks he was Jotham Nettleton, the good-looking dragon of the royal army.

Why this startling metamorphosis? Why was he alone in the middle of the Ashley, exposed to the bullet of some ally of the very cause he served?

The solution of the mystery will soon be known to the reader.

The hour was late, and the disguised trooper was about to advance when he heard a voice on the bank which he had lately left.

Then there was a step in the water, and Jotham Nettleton glanced over his shoulder.

He saw a horseman in the ford, and the plashing of water assured the dragon a rencontre could not be avoided.

"If he be a rebel I'll hob-nob with him," he murmured. "If he be a Tory 'I'll frighten him out of his wits."

Unconscious, as it seemed, of the dragon's proximity, the new-comer advanced across the stream, and all at once stopped to allow his horse to quench his thirst.

Jotham Nettleton could have touched him with his sword.

He was surprised that the night rider had not noticed him. Was he asleep in the saddle? Below the tawny flowed the lucent waters of South Carolina's historic river, and the stars over their heads were reflected in the bosom of the stream.

The dragon's horse saw the steed that drank near by, but did not manifest his presence with the usual salutation—a whinney. He seemed to know that his master desired silence, and his look at the other horse and his rider was big with equine curiosity.

Jotham Nettleton never took his eyes from the person who sat so near him in the starlight, and when he saw him gather up the reins which had fallen on the neck of his steed he raised his right hand.

The next moment the two men were together, and the trooper had jerked the other from his saddle.

"I've made a good catch!" he cried, in triumph. "It isn't every night that a patriot can secure such game. I don't want your horse," and he struck his captive's steed with his spur, and saw him gallop through the water and down the dim bank.

"You're one of the meanest Tories in these parts," the dragon continued, holding his prisoner with a grip of iron. "Your father serves the king like a man, but you go about the country insulting the very men who crossed the ocean to stand between your dirty neck and rebel ropes. Lancaster Wingdon. I've a mind to fling you into the water and ride over you."

"Mercy!" gasped the young Tory, who did not recognize in the bearded face the features of his old enemy, Jotham Nettleton. "I am your prisoner. Take me down to Marion, and let me be treated as a prisoner of war."

"I dispose of you, sir," was the pitiless reply. "Do not think that I am going to take your

worthless life. I wouldn't have your cowardly blood on my hands for the riches of Golconda. I would not dirty this pure water with your body; but I will cause you to remember this meeting."

With the last words on his lips, the dragon urged his horse forward with a light touch of the spurs, and a minute later they were on the bank.

"Do you see your light?" asked the trooper, pointing toward a light that looked like a star.

"I do. It is the lamp in my father's library."

"That is right," said Nettleton, with a smile. "Did that father ever whip you?"

Lancaster Wingdon gave his captor a look of indignation.

"My back has never felt the rod," he answered, with a certain glow of pride.

"Then it shall feel it!" said the dragon. "Here is a tree. I have the cords."

The young Tory's face flushed at the threatened chastisement, and he ground his teeth with unspeakable rage when the trooper dismounting set him on the ground.

"Are you really going to whip me?"

"I am. Take off your coat!"

Lancaster Wingdon hesitated, but the hand of his enemy was on his shoulder, and he sullenly obeyed the command.

Then the dragon produced some strong cords from an inner pocket, and bound his indignant victim to the graceful tree that grew on the bank.

During the process of binding, not a word passed between the twain, and the brief silence that followed the task was painful in the extreme.

It was broken by Jotham Nettleton, who held several stout whittes in his right hand.

"Are you ready?" he asked his captive.

Lancaster Wingdon did not reply.

A moment later the air was cut by the descending whittes, which fell heavily on the young Tory's back.

Again and again they struck the dragon's victim, with a force that made the tender flesh quiver, and reddened the skin with blood.

The picket, after giving Jotham Nettleton a look of scorn, put out his hand.

"There!" exclaimed the dragon, throwing the broken whittes at his feet. "I have given you a first-class trouncing. You may go home and tell old Essex Wingdon how I punished you for your impudence. Don't cross my path again. It may not be a trouncing next time."

It was with difficulty that the young man could stand when his persecutor released him from the tree, and the dragon laughed to see his exhaustion.

"Good-night, Mr. Wingdon!" he said, with mock civility. "A Tory's hide is soon tanned. I will see Nick o' the Night ere long, and I'll tell him how I trounced you."

Lancaster Wingdon gave the disguised dragon a look of inveterate hatred and revenge, and saw him mount his horse and ride away.

In after days Jotham Nettleton reaped the fruits of the seed which he sowed that night on the banks of the starlit Ashley.

When the morning dawned he came in sight of a dense wood which he boldly penetrated.

He did not proceed far before he was halted by a horseman, who inquired concerning his destination.

"I want to fight with Francis Marion for liberty," he replied to the queries. "Freedom needs swords now, and I come to offer my humble but trusty weapon to the Swamp Fox."

The picket, after giving Jotham Nettleton a look of scorn, put out his hand.

"I welcome you, fellow," he said. "We need a few more good swords, and your arm looks strong."

"It can drive my sword to a red-coat's shoulder!" said the trooper. "Marion has but to try me to find me true metal."

"We'll see the General."

A few moments later Jotham Nettleton of the Royal Horse found himself in one of Francis Marion's camps.

Among the patriots he acted well the role he was playing, fully aware that discovery meant death.

By-and-by he stood face to face with Marion, whose eagle look seemed to read the very secrets of his breast.

CHAPTER IX.

A SCENE IN MARION'S CAMP.

NIGHT in the partisan camp.

It was Marion's camp in the center of the dense greenwood, where we left Jotham Nettleton, who, as William Laurens, had enrolled himself in the patriot ranks.

The men were scattered throughout the little encampment singly and in groups. Some were cleaning pistols and sharpening swords, while others discussed the prospects of peace and wondered when their leader would call them to the saddle for another nocturnal foray.

Marion himself sat near a mouldering fire interested, as it seemed, in the roasting of some tempting potatoes which Congo's swarthy hands had thrust into the admixture of ashes and coals.

Near him sat one of his trusty sub-lieutenants, who watched his leader's face, which in the light of the fire was a study. Careworn and haggard, it was; but now and then the dark eyes would flash with the light of battle.

With his eyes wide open, Marion was thinking of exciting times—nay, he was dreaming of the capture and the gallant chase.

Over this scene a sky dark but dotted with stars.

The greenwood was one of the fortresses of American liberty, and its inmates were the heroes who could sing:

"Our hand is few, but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the forest tree;
We know the forest round us
As seamen know the sea;
We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass."

Little did those gallant patriots dream that their deeds were to go down to the "latest of time," encircled by a halo of glory such as only immortality bestows.

Their good swords rust,
Their steeds are dust;
But their souls are with the saints, we trust."

Immortal, gallant Marion's men!

A few were sleeping, but the great majority of the denizens of the camp were wide awake and engaged in the various occupations I have mentioned.

Marion did not remove his gaze from the heap of coals until Congo drew the roasted potatoes forth, and with a smile, assured his master that they were done to a nicety.

Then the partisan looked at the sabaturn who moved forward.

"I am afraid he will not come!" the General said, with anxiety manifest on his troubled countenance.

"He may not come to-night," was the reply, "but the messenger said that he would surely be here, and you know, General, that he has never failed to keep his word."

"Never!" said Marion. "I am anxious to see the boy. To tell the truth, Wolcott, he is a power of strength to the cause of liberty in the South, and I am not surprised to learn that Lord Rawdon has sent a proclamation from Canada outlawing him."

Saturday Journal

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Sunshine Papers.

Observations—Funerally.

"Yes, Clara, I am home, and very tired I am, too. But I enjoyed myself very much, my dear; and, really, if we were to have a funeral next week, I think I could surpass this Trelawney affair without a great deal of extra expense, which is very comforting, you know; for if there is any one thing that is pleasing, it is to show people how things ought to be done. Not that I believe in making a parade on such occasions, not at all; and if your poor, dear pa died to-morrow, I am sure I should sufficiently control my feelings to insist upon having no parade made. But I do hope I should have my arrangements in a little better taste than the Trelawneys'. Only think, Clara, of but fifteen carriages! Why, I would have twenty-five, at least, if I had to do as plenty of other people do—appropriate one carriage to each flower-piece, and only put two persons in a coach. And very inferior crape and ribbon it was upon the door, as rich as they are, and such a stylish girl as she was. I would have had the most expensive that money could have bought. Ah! well, the disposition of some people will betray itself, even on such solemn occasions."

"Many there! Yes, the parlors were crowded; but, instead of having them darkened, and the pictures shrouded with crape, and the gas lighted, they had the sunshine streaming in and everything as natural and cheerful in the rooms as if one had only dropped in to make a call. And the coffin, Clara, was so plain—rosewood, of course, but hardly any silver about it; just the simplest plate, with 'Helen Trelawney, aged twenty-two,' upon it. Now, you may tell me you know that she was only twenty-two, but you must not expect me to believe it. Why, you are twenty your next birthday—do not mention it! Certainly not, only between ourselves—and Helen Trelawney was almost old enough to be your mother. Twenty-two, indeed! That girl was nearer twenty-six, if I know anything of ages."

"But she *did* look divinely, my love; I must say that. Her hair was curled so sweetly, and she had a blue silk corsage on that was literally covered with white silk embroidery—I told you they would never bury her in that new suit; but I must say I think it was execrable taste to put blue colored flowers at her throat and around her; only to think of scarlet and creamy carnations in a coffin; though I heard some one say it was done to please Fred Marston, who was almost wild over her death. But the other flowers—I hope we should have had a finer show if it had been an affair of ours! Only three wreaths, two pillows, a broken column, two harps, three crowns, five anchors, and seven crosses, and I am quite sure as to the numbers, for I counted expressly to tell you."

"And I was glad I decided to wear my new diamond drops, for Mrs. Jewels was there with her clusters; quite *passé* here are now, too, you know. And it was very shocking the way some of the people were dressed; as if they had entirely forgotten that it was a house of mourning."

"Oh! I must tell you, Clara, how I met Mrs. Daniels, Mrs. Marston's sister-in-law, and that she asked me to go up-stairs with her. Such a quiet set as the mourners were; they hardly cried at all; and I suppose Mrs. Trelawney's girls did not care much, as Helen was only their step-sister; and, I tell you, Belle kept her eyes on Fred Marston, and he isn't so near dying of grief for Helen that he was not very attentive to Belle. Well, the rooms up there were furnished nicely enough, though they had bureaus instead of dressing-cases, so the furniture cannot be so very new; and there was a lovely toilet-set of blue silk and white lace that I took a good look at so that you can make one like it for our best room."

"Did Mrs. Trelawney put on mourning? Yes, the very deepest, and no wonder; I have no doubt she is rather glad at heart to have a chance to wear it, she looks so young and fair in it—such plump, blonde people generally do. And, no doubt, Mrs. Trelawney is thinking, too, that now Mrs. Trelawney's only child is out of the way there is a chance for her girls to step into Helen's shoes in more ways than one. Helen always had elegant clothes, and they will just fit Annie when she leaves off black, in which, I must say, she looks very pretty. And Mrs. Trelawney will not neglect to secure such an excellent catch as Fred Marston for Belle. Oh! how frightfully she appeared with crape near her face—yellow as a mummy!"

"Mrs. Daniels quite insisted that I should go to the cemetery, and with whom should I get into a carriage but Mrs. Bascombe! Such a delightful chat as we had! She told me all about Emma's spring suit and her own, and I am sure they are not as elegant as ours. And Emma is going to give a tableau party, and desires you to take part, and she is so glad the Trelawney family have gone into mourning so that she will not have to ask them to perform. And Mrs. Bascombe quite agreed with me that people should not seek to make too much

show of funerals, but that the Trelawneys might have had a little more taste in regard to their arrangements."

"Where is my novel? I'll read a little; it will rest me. Look in the fashion journal for patterns for your gorging suits. Surely, Clara, you forget that I have just come from a funeral, and that it would be scarcely proper to devote my mind to such frivolities before dinner!"

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

TROUBLED WATERS.

How much trouble there is in this world if we only come to think of it. I wouldn't advise you to make a thorough study of it; but, sometimes, one cannot help thinking over these multitudinous troubles—real or imaginary—that beset human nature until one is almost tempted to exclaim, with Widow Bedott, 'We're all poor critters.'

Notice the great amount of space, in some of the papers, given to fond belles and beaux who pour forth their wails and sorrows into the too willing ears of the editors. To read some of these intensely interesting (!) missives one would think it were a fearful and terrible affair to be in love, when it causes folks to founder so much in troubled waters. For my part, I do not see how the goodly editors contrive to still the tempest or pour oil on the troubled waters.

I do truly and verily suppose that when Johnny and Mollie have had a "flare up," and Billy and Susie have "had words" with each other, they think themselves deserted, their spirits seem crushed, and they feel as though they would like to pine away and fill an early grave. Yes, they seem as much lost at sea as a mariner would on a sinking ship. But the good editors appear to throw them out a rope and they are saved.

Perhaps I am making light of too serious a subject, but some of these quarrels seem so absurd and ridiculous that one cannot help laughing. If I were to say that love was an absurdity, or that there was a deal of absurdity in love, I'm afraid some of my readers would want to box my ears, call me an old maid (I wouldn't mind that) and cause one more being to wallow in troubled waters.

Lots and lots of the troubles that beset many are brought upon them by themselves because they couldn't curb their passions and restrain their tempers. A little phosphorus is oftentimes capable of creating a great conflagration, and it generally takes more water to quench the same than it took phosphorus to light it.

Look at our divorce courts—it's not a very unenlightening picture to draw your attention to, by the way—what a sea of contention they present! People who vowed they would be to each other—man or woman could be to each other—who thought no trial too hard, no sacrifice too great, and no journey too irksome if they could gain the love of another; but now to see them doing all they can to sever the tie! They are battling in troubled waters, and the waters are muddy and dirty. In our grandfathers' days, though you may think they were "old fogies," there were fewer divorces, thank Heaven! Ah, me! what would some of those who have lain in the grave eighty odd years, say and do at the proceedings of the present day, could we re-materialize them? I imagine they would want to return to their graves as soon as possible for fear of contamination.

Isn't it singular that persons will jump into hot water, and then complain because they get a scalding?

It troubles many persons because they are not as wealthy or as handsome as others—because they cannot dress as well or give as costly presents. It preys upon them like a nightmare, and causes them a deal of annoyance in their waking hours. They groan over these trifling annoyances as though they had lost a fortune, and they forget all the while that there is real trouble all around and about us—trouble that is deep and quick—such trouble as causes aching hearts and weeping eyes—trouble that would be too much for human beings to bear did not the good Lord give them strength to live through it.

Many who have such troubles are more apt to bear their burdens with firmness than those whose worriments are trifling. We may think them cold and marble-like, and yet their very calmness and silence may only be submission to a higher Power. They know that, though the storm is raging and the waters troubled, God will, in His own good time, send them comfort and happiness.

When your griefs are petty, think of those whose trials are greater, and you will soon forget your own in endeavoring to assuage theirs. Drown your own troubles in the troubled waters and you will feel happier, wiser, and better.

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Moving.

Of course we had to move this spring. My wife wanted to be fashionable, and we moved with the rest of the city.

I was moved to object, but she moved that I keep silent. Not wishing to give her any offense I set in to pulling up carpet. She had a house picked out in a more desirable locality and already secured.

In a few hours that house looked like a whirlwind had gone through it and had stayed there long enough to have a little fun of its own.

The harvest of fun which I reaped from all that confusion you could put in your vest-pocket.

I fell down-stairs with a stand; together we rolled to the foot, and then that stand got on to me and stamped me with four legs, and the drawer jumped out and struck me over the eye. I got up mad and fought that stand until there was just enough of it left for my wife, who came up running, to grab and make after me with. I put a little tincture of arnica on my bruises, and took down a stove. The pipe fell out and took me over the head. Two feet came out from under the stove, but one of mine didn't. I shoved the stove over and it fell on one of its own doors and broke it; it had no business to do that. My wife wanted to know if I was breaking up housekeeping in earnest. I was mad and told her that I felt like Marius among the ruins of Carthage, and felt almost like I did not want anybody to Marius any more. I stumbled over a pile of kettles in getting out of the way, but I got out.

It takes a man of cool judgment and unswerving equanimity of temper to sit down on the floor to meditate over the miseries of life and the mistake he made in not being born in some summer climate, especially when that floor is upholstered with crooked tacks which have been drawn from the carpet; this I did, but I did not rest there. I got up and shook myself and there was a shower of tacks for a minute.

When I found my new silk plug-hat stuffed full of clothes-brush, stove-brush, pot-hook, and a broken paper of nails, and mashed into a box full of old tin cans and bottles, it caused me to jar my wife's grandfather's portrait in contents, which I was taking from the wall, and it fell on my head, and went over it like a yoke. I hadn't imagined I could go so completely through the fine arts so quickly.

My best Sunday coat I noticed was wrapped around some dishes and stuffed in the clothes-basket, but I had my revenge, for in carrying the basket out I tramped on the cat—which seems only to live for that purpose—and dropped the basket, and thereby saved the hired girl a good month's work in breaking dishes.

It was impossible for me to tell where so many old boots and old shoes came from as I saw stuck in a barrel along with my best pants and shirts, with the coal-oil-can on top to keep them down; and when I took the lamp off the table in carrying a feather-bed I was so mad that I couldn't hold myself, but my wife grabbed me and held me for awhile lest I might damage something else.

In taking down a bed the rails both came out, and one fell on my foot, and then the head-board fell over on me and raised such a bump on my head that it was hard to tell which was the head.

I didn't care so much for the dryman running against me with his arms full of bed-slats, but I had the looking-glass, and in a second it was nothing but an empty frame, and that made me so mad that after I had kicked him I vowed I would never have a mirror about the house, unless it was made of sheet-iron.

It was unfortunate that all the drawers of the bureau fell out as we were getting it down the steps, after taking the looking-glass off of it by the top of the door. I felt so sorry over that, I let go, and the bureau went over on the dryman and they went down the steps together, but the bureau was the best man, for it stayed on the top all the way. I thought at the time that if the dryman had not been under it the bureau would have been seriously injured on the stone steps; so is it that even accidents turn to something good.

When I heard a dreadful racket up-stairs, and ran up, I found my wife trying her best to get her foot out from under a dressing-bureau that had tilted over while she was trying to get the carpet out from under it. I wanted to smash the bureau up, but she wouldn't let me. I found that it had injured her temper a good deal more than her foot.

Then the dryman succeeded admirably in distributing furniture and other things at regular intervals along the street, and sometimes they would go so far as to stop and pick them up; and what things I didn't happen to break they did.

The next time my wife talks of a move I will not second it, but I will divide the furniture and stay—unless the landlord gets too anxious for his money. If I should have to move I would rather hire another family to move, in my place.

Yours movingly,

WASHINGTON WHITEORN.

ONE of the most notable novels of the season is Mrs. M. V. Victor's "Passing the Portal, or a Girl's Struggle." Just published by Carleton & Co., New York. It is not only beautiful and enticing as a story, but adds an exciting and instructive interest in the "struggle" which an orthodox New England girl has with the new faith that science is forcing upon us under the guise of evolution, natural selection, self-generation, etc., etc. The clear-headed, strong-souled girl passes through very deep waters, and from a heart and soul experience that touches the deepest depths of woman nature, she enters upon a faith so restful and sweet, that heaven seems not far off from the life we daily live. To all it will be a most delightful book to read, while to those seeking to solve the momentous problem of the hereafter it will be a very precious volume indeed. It is printed with exquisite taste. A large sale of course awaits it.

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Topics of the Time.

—Old Mr. Perkins has grown sick and wearied with hearing his grand-children incessantly talking about the coming glories of the Philadelphia show; but he succeeded in silencing them for a time the other day by remarking querulously, "Ay, ay, ye may say what ye please about yer Shintinays, but ye can't make 'em what they used to be in my young days," and he turned off the gas and shuffled away to bed in the dark.

—The proprietor of the Oakland (Cal.) Trotting Park has a spaniel dog that is a great lover of horse races. The moment the bell on the judges' stand rings up the horses, Carlo mounts the balcony of a hotel opposite, which commands a full view of the track. He watches the race with interest, and if it is closely contested barks vociferously as the horses pass under the string. When the heat is ended he runs down and takes a look at the horses, and is patted by the turfites, but starts back the moment the bell rings.

—The two persons concerned in a recent St. Louis tragedy were not high in the social scale. May Dean was a chambermaid and William Cooper a gardener, and they were employed in the same family. May was young and handsome, and William naturally fell in love with her; but he was neither young nor handsome, and naturally she did not reciprocate his passion. Year after year he stubbornly pressed his suit, encouraged by the fact that she had no other lover, and possibly relying on some such teaching as, "If at once you don't succeed, try, try again." A few days ago she decided that she would bear her home no longer, and she transferred her services to a family in another part of the city. He then put a loaded revolver into his pocket, called upon her, and gave her a choice between promising to marry him or dying. She refused to promise, and tried by flight to avoid the alternative, but he shot her fatally and then killed himself.

—The Assize Court of the Seine is about to try a mysterious case. The prisoner is named Gervais, and is a working mason, who lived in a pretty house with a garden attached, called a villa, at Garenne, near St. Germain. It was his freehold, and his neighbors wondered where he could have got the money to purchase it. Three years ago, he being a widower, a widow named Madame Bonnerie and her son set up a toy shop in the front parlor. They soon lived together as man and wife. Some months since she disappeared, and Gervais said that she had gone home to her friends in Alsace. Two months later he married a girl of nineteen and brought her to the villa, the old house and set up a toy shop in the front parlor. They soon lived together as man and wife. Some months since she disappeared, and Gervais said that she had gone home to her friends in Alsace. Two months later he married a girl of nineteen and brought her to the villa, the old house and set up a toy shop in the front parlor. 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A MEMORY OF SPRING.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

Here grew a wood-anemone; he broke it from its slender stalk:
"Take it," he said, "and keep for me, in memory of this happy walk."

Upon this hillock, fringed with brown, they sat awhile to talk and rest,
And watch the radiant sun go down its golden pathway in the west.

A bird sang in its nest of flowers, "The white-winged bird of love," he said,
"Sings sometimes in these hearts of ours, God pity those whose bird is dead."

And then a strain of melody rung through and through her happy heart,
So full it was of joy and love, its echo never can depart.

Here on this bank of emerald moss grew violets, blue as sapphires are,
So thick she could not note the loss of those he put into her hair.

They saw the squirrels glancing out from screening leaves where acorns grew,
And heard their chatter all about; old sights and sounds, yet always new.

They stopped beside the little stream and saw their faces side by side,
From out the dimpled waters gleam; "Your face," said he, "and mine, my bride."

And then—what saw they in the brook? two pairs of lips, but one caress!
She spied a roguish robin look, with laughing woe, from her nest.

And here, beneath this old, old tree, he whispered words that thrilled her through
Like deep, bewitching melody—forever old, forever new.

And what she answered you may guess, I know he did not ask again,
But gave her cheek a shy caress, and whispered "In the autumn—then!"

And when the wheat fields turned to gold he called her by the name of wife;
The tenderest name that words can hold, the sweetest cadence of a life.

The years have come and gone away, with gloom and sunshine joy and loss;
Some shadow mars the brightest day, and every heart must have its cross.

So in their heart some hopes have sprung that never grew to perfect flowers,
But white-winged birds of love have sung through summer days and autumn hours.

Thank God for all the hopes fulfilled. Thank God for life, and love, and health,
And all the blessings that have filled their hearts with life's unreckoned wealth.

The Men of '76.

MOULTRIE,

The Palmetto Defender.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

THE South has no name more honored than that of William Moultrie, nor had the country, in its time of most dread trial, a truer lover or more skillful defender.

Moultrie, born in the year 1731, of Scotch ancestry, saw no military service until the Cherokee war of 1761. There, as captain of volunteers, he participated in the battle of Etchoe, where white and red men mingled in terrible conflict, and Moultrie's lieutenant, Francis Marion, led the forlorn hope that opened the fight and displayed the enemy's position. The heroism of all, in this fierce combat, won a mastering victory.

The Indian campaigns schooled Sumter, Moultrie, Marion, Huger, Pickens and others, who afterward became noted as patriots, and did much to inspire the colony with that self-reliance which is the assurance of liberty. When the struggle with Great Britain came, South Carolina looked to her sons, trained in the Indian wars, for leaders, and found in Moultrie one of the men to lean upon. Then a well-to-do planter in the parish of St. Helena, he was elected to the Provisional Congress in 1775, and gave his voice, in that most important assembly, for freedom from the mother country.

Returning home, at the first menace of danger to Charleston, he was commissioned colonel, and proceeded at once to action by seizing all the king's stores, arms and magazines, by which to obtain the necessary material of war. With guns thus obtained, he planted a battery on Moultrie's Point, which opening on two British sloops of war that menaced the city, drove them off. Then he seized Johnson's Island and its fort, abandoned by the English garrison in anticipation of his assault. This step made the harbor temporarily safe, but the spirit of war, now fully aroused, rendered vaster preparations for defense necessary.

As one of the committee of Public Safety, he counseled the fortification of Sullivan's Island, and, sustained by Governor Rutledge, he proceeded to fortify that spot, commanding the main channel to the harbor. This fortification was rude enough—simply a breastwork of palmetto logs and sand, with embrasures. It was completed in March (1776), and slowly equipped with about thirty guns, and secured powder enough for a six hours' fight if carefully used.

General Charles Lee, having been sent by Congress to take charge of operations at that most important point, greatly disapproved of this fortification, anticipating that with common sense generalship, the British ships would run by the batteries and put Charleston at once under fire; but the governor forbade Moultrie to take orders from Lee; the troops there were South Carolina militia, and as such only amenable to State authority. So Moultrie prepared for the fleet, which came down on the fortification June 28th, under Admiral Sir Peter Parker. It numbered twenty-five gun ships, four frigates, and about a dozen smaller vessels, with a bomb-ketch, all splendidly armed for the work in hand—the taking of Charleston.

The enemy, as Rutledge and Moultrie surmised they would, drew up before the Sullivan Island work, and at eight o'clock A. M. opened fire. The bombardment was tremendous, but those soft walls of palmetto logs and sand did not quake or crumble, while the deep morass in the center of the fort inclosure, received the bombs and rendered them harmless. Moultrie was not disconcerted in the least. Walking around among his men, pipe in mouth, he was as deliberate and jolly as if on parade. His guns were served, after a little experimenting by the riflemen, with admirable precision, and to Sir Peter's great disaster. For twelve full hours that awful cannonade was kept up. Moultrie ran out of powder, and fired his guns only at intervals, until Marion, at immense risk, secured a small supply from the Haddrell's Point work, and later, Rutledge sent a few hundred pounds more. "Make every shot tell," were the orders, and so effectively did they tell that the enemy's ships were literally sogged with wounds before night put an end to the fight.

Then Sir Peter retired over the bar. His losses had been fearful. Of the two large vessels the Bristol lost 40 killed and 71 wounded—the Experiment suffering in like proportion. Sir Peter lost an arm, and Lord Campbell, late governor of the province, was mortally shot. Several of the smaller vessels were destroyed. Moultrie's loss, out of a force of 400, was 10

killed and 20 wounded! Palmetto logs and sand had won against ribs of oak.

This brilliant event rid the Carolinas of British presence for three years, during which Moultrie served within the borders of the State. He was made a brigadier in the Continental service, and guarded well what his courage had secured.

The campaign of 1779 transferred the seat of war once more to the Carolinas. Savannah having fallen into their hands, to secure Charleston also became an absolute necessity for the enemy. The brave and prudent Lincoln was sent to the South to confront this danger. Moultrie was stationed at Port Royal Island to watch the approach to Charleston. There he defeated the British, in a sharp encounter, to their very serious loss. Then he was called to face a force that he had no proper means to combat. Lincoln having moved, with most of his forces, upon Savannah, to compel the enemy to fight him there, Prevost, the British general, moved on Charleston. Moultrie, with but one thousand militia, could only retard the column, while the patriotic Rutledge hastened forward all the militia available. Lincoln, apprised of the danger, was too far off to save the city, upon which Prevost pressed on Moultrie's heels.

The enemy appeared before the city May 11th, and May 12th demanded an immediate surrender.

The citizens, to avoid a bombardment, would have agreed to terms, but Moultrie's woe-filled answer was:—"Tell General Prevost we will fight it out!"—just what the Briton couldn't wait to do, for Lincoln was fast approaching with 4,000 men, and so, on the night of the 12th, the British re-crossed the Ashley and retired to James Island, and thence to Georgia. Moultrie's inflexible courage and ready skill had once more saved his State.

Again the trial was made. Sir Henry Clinton, in February, 1780, with a powerful fleet and land force of 10,000, appeared off the harbor. The ships ran the Fort Moultrie (Sullivan's Island) batteries, and occupying the neck of land between the Ashley and Cooper rivers, opened fire on Charleston, April 12th. Lincoln's whole force was less than half that of Clinton. The Briton was very cautious—the defense very stubborn, but the odds were too great, and after six weeks of brave struggle the city surrendered, with all its defenders—Moultrie among them. His conduct through-

"Indeed it is, and his form as graceful, while he at once went to the head of all his classes. He'll strip the university of its prizes, I fear. Yonder he comes now, and he seems to be Claude Clinton's very shadow."

The speakers were two students, standing on the campus. One was Mark Leslie, the brother of Louise, who had written so kindly to Claude Clinton, urging him to reform his evil habits.

As Mark's companion spoke, Claude Clinton and the object of their conversation approached, and the latter was presented as Everard Ainslie.

Mark Leslie greeted him warmly, and gazed earnestly into his wondrously handsome face, and upon his slight, graceful form, and from that moment, in his mind, a seed of suspicion was sown that was destined to germinate rapidly and in the end bring forth bitter fruit for him to pluck.

The more Mark Leslie saw of Everard Ainslie, the more his suspicions were confirmed, until he was thoroughly convinced that he was right in his supposition.

Knowing Claude Clinton well, he also liked him well, though he knew him to be gay and reckless and leading a life which no young girl could safely justify or overlook.

For this reason he had urged upon his sister Louise to banish Claude Clinton from her heart, for, living as they did in the same neighborhood, they had been friends from earliest childhood.

Knowing that Louise was believed engaged to Claude Clinton, by many of his fellow students, and convinced that he was playing some deep game, and dragging down to ruin some innocent girl, Mark Leslie one day sought an interview with his fellow student in his own rooms.

What passed in that interview none ever knew, but angry words were heard, followed by a pistol-shot, a cry, a heavy fall, and Claude Clinton fled from the college, a hunted man, haunted with the thought that he had taken the life of Mark Leslie, who, up to a short while before, had been his most intimate friend.

As the students and professors rushed into the chambers, they beheld a scene that filled them with horror, for Mark Leslie lay prone upon the floor, bleeding profusely from a wound in his side.

Surgical aid was instantly summoned, and the wounded student received every attention.

that he would behold in chase the phantom of poor Mark Leslie.

"My God! thus rushes my life into a new wickedness, and I tread the threshold of manhood as a murderer," he hissed forth between his teeth.

Then, after awhile he continued:

"But he was too bitter toward me—he brought it upon himself. Poor, poor Mark, you have fallen by my hand, and over me rushes the remembrance of our happy boyhood—the many joyous hours we have passed together—and Louise, yes, Louise! what will she think of me now?"

"Curse me bitterly as her brother's murderer! Come, you brute; you but creep along," and the sharp spurs sunk deep into the flanks of the tired animal, while, in disjointed sentences, the unhappy man still continued to muse aloud.

"And all for her!" he cried, bitterly—"for a woman yet a girl, and who I verily believe hates me."

"Curses rest on her, and upon me for being a fool to marry her! Oh! that I were free from her—that I could fly from her memory and from the stain on my conscience."

"No, it will not wash out—blood-stains are indelible—ha! now that I am forced to fly like a hunted hound, she will seek my home, make known the damnable secret that she is my wife, and revel in my wealth—for her silvery tongue, her beautiful eyes will touch the heart of even my stern father—curse her, oh, curse her—ha!"

Claude Clinton suddenly drew rein, for before him loomed up an ivy-grown church, surrounded by the glittering monuments of the dead.

The moon had risen and shed down upon the lonely and sacred spot a flood of silvery light, and the scene was most impressive; all was silence and desertion; for, excepting a glimmering light from the window of the distant parsonage, it seemed as if only the dead were near.

"By Heaven! how strange that I should have taken this road! Yes, it is the same old church, with its dead sentinels around it, for, surely, the dead guard it from intrusion. By the Heaven above me I will do it."

The last part of the sentence was almost shrieked, and instantly springing from his horse, Claude Clinton hunched him to the fence, and walked with determined step toward the lonely church.

To his surprise, he found the door partly



Claude Clinton and the object of their conversation approached, and the latter was presented as Everard Ainslie.

out the siege afforded them for general comment: his escape from injury seemed marvelous. He succumbed to hunger rather than to Sir Henry Clinton's guns.

So dangerous a man the enemy could afford to hold as a prisoner, and for two years he remained in British hands, during all that period keeping watch and guard over the interests of his countrymen in the city, as citizens or prisoners. Two very subtle and powerful attempts to win him by tempting offers, over to the royal cause, he rejected with patriotic fervor. Not until May 3d, 1781, was he sent to the North, but only when the capture of Burgoyne's army gave the Continentals equivalent for prisoners then in British hands, was Moultrie finally exchanged. Owing, however, to some question of comparative rank, his parole was not canceled until late in February, 1782.

Congress having made him a Major-General, Moultrie went South in the summer to resume his duties in the field, but the war really was over, and he was permitted to enter Charleston on the day of its re-occupation by Greene and Marion, (December 14th)—a proud day for citizens and soldiery alike.

Moultrie was a favorite of all classes. His genial, honest nature made him so popular that the people fairly idolized the man, while the record he had made as a soldier gave him the excellent consideration which only the few great can command. He was chosen governor of the State in 1785, and again 1794, each time serving much to his credit and to the good of the State.

Full of honors, and secure in the affections of all men, he died September 27th, 1805.

Without a Heart:

WALKING ON THE BRINK.

A STORY OF LIFE'S SUNSHINE AND SHADOW.

BY COLONEL PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "GIVEN FOR GOLD," "THE FLYING YANKEE," "THE MEXICAN SPY,"
"TRACKED THROUGH LIFE,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

THE SECRET DISCOVERED.

"WELL, Leslie, what do you think of the new student—Clinton's chum?"

"I think if he were petticoats I would fall desperately in love with him, for his face is as beautiful as any woman's I ever beheld."

His companions gathered outside the door and conversed in suppressed whispers, while others started in hot pursuit of the murderer, for none believed that Mark Leslie could live.

Among the group outside the door, and pallid and silent, stood the new scholar, Everard Ainslie, unmindful of any of the questions addressed him.

At length he entered the room, for, being the chum of Claude Clinton, he was admitted, and walking up to the bed whereon lay the wounded man, he said, nervously:

"Why did Claude Clinton do this deed?"

Mark Leslie turned his splendid eyes upon the student, and said, faintly:

"Come closer to me."

Everard Ainslie placed his delicate ear near to the lips of the sufferer, who said, in a whisper:

"I know you as you are. Others will soon know, so leave the university at once."

"From my heart I thank you. You are a noble man."

"This must not be allowed," broke in the surgeon, angrily, and stooping, Everard Ainslie pressed a kiss upon the forehead of Mark Leslie, and turned away quickly, while all present glanced at him, in surprise, at his sudden and strange mark of affection for his fellow student.

Walking to an escritoire in the next room, Everard Ainslie took therefrom a large roll of bank-bills, a bundle of papers or letters, and a silver-mounted pistol and jeweled dirk.

These he quickly secreted about his person, and throwing his cloak across his arm, he took up his hat and walked rapidly from the room, after one earnest, searching glance around him.

Ten minutes after he had gone forth into the night alone, without one word of farewell to fellow student or professor, and forever turned his back upon the university where he had passed months of, apparently, contented student life.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HIGHWAY TO RUIN.

WHEN Claude Clinton fled from the room, after the death-blow aimed at the heart of Mark Leslie, he dashed at once to the stables of the institution, and in five minutes after was flying along the mountain highway mounted upon his own steed, for a horse was another luxury the young millionaire indulged in as a means of education.

For several hours he pressed his steed hard, his mind in a chaos of troubled thought, his brow knitted and teeth firmly set, while, ever and anon, he would glance nervously behind him, either in fear of pursuit, or from a fear

open, and murmured, "They fear no intrusion here."

Entering, he soon found himself within the sacred edifice, and the moonlight streaming through the windows enabled him to see his way.

It was a sacred spot, a lonely place for a man flying from justice, after aiming a death-blow at his truest friend, and Claude Clinton was fully impressed with the scene and walked with hesitating step up the broad aisle.

In front of the chancel he paused, and glanced nervously around him, while he murmured aloud, "Here we knelt and were made man and wife, and here I curse her now!"

A moment he stood as if overwhelmed by the rush of bitter thoughts upon him, and then he sprung lightly over the low rail and crossed the chancel toward the vestry-room door.

The knob turned to his touch, and he entered the room to start back with a half cry of fright, for, at the table before the long window, sat a human form.

A closer glance reassured him; he saw that the man was asleep, for his head was bowed forward upon his desk—his hand still holding a pen, rested upon his unfinished sermon, and regular breathing came from the ministerial lungs.

Right upon the sleeper fell the ray of moonlight, and displaying also a candlestick with empty socket, for the candle had burned out some time before.

A dry sermon indeed, to drive its composer to sleep? thought Claude Clinton, with cruel wit, and then, not to be turned aside from the purpose he had in view, he cautiously crossed the room toward a book-case, one door of which was open.

Noislessly he searched for a moment, and then drew from a shelf a large and time-worn book—the records of the church.

With the moonlight streaming down upon the open page, he soon found that for which he was in search, and stealthily tore the leaf from the volume which held records of the marriages and deaths of the parish for half a century.

The tearing sound awoke the sleeper; the minister sprung to his feet, and beholding a stranger before him, as he believed robbing the church of its silver communion service, which was also kept in the book-case, he rushed upon him and held him with firm grasp ere Claude Clinton could fly.

Hastily shoving the stolen record into his bosom, the young student cried, sternly:

"Unhand me, old man!"

"Never! you vile creature, who would rob the sanctuary of your God. I will hold you, and deliver you to justice," cried the thorough-

ly aroused, indignant, and fearless old minister.

"Unhand me, I say," almost shrieked Claude Clinton, and though a powerful man, he in vain endeavored to shake off the firm clutch that held him.

"Never!" still replied the man of God, and with a bitter oath, Claude Clinton drew from his pocket a keen knife; the blade flashed in the moonlight, and with a crunching sound sunk deep into the bosom of the protector of God's sanctuary.

"Oh! God have mercy and forgive him this deed!" cried the old man, staggering back, while the blood from his wound spurted over his murderer.

Wildly the long arms were thrown about, then the hands clasped, as if in prayer, a deep groan came from the pallid lips, and the wounded man fell dead across the table, whereon, a short time before, he had been writing his Sabbath sermon.

With a cry of horror at his deadly act, Claude Clinton rushed from the sacred edifice he had desecrated, and bounding into his horse, darted away at the utmost speed of his horse. In his terror and haste to fly from the scene of death, he was unmindful that the record he had taken life to get possession of fell from his bosom, and fluttered down the road before the balmy breeze of the autumn night.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STAINED RECORD.

EVERARD AINSLIE left the university grounds, and wended his way rapidly down the moonlighted road, leading to the village, a mile distant.

Arriving there he sought out a livery-stable and hired a man to drive him to the city, thirty miles distant.

What thoughts passed through the mind of Everard Ainslie, as he drove swiftly along the country road, it were hard to tell; but certain it was that the driver found him a most taciturn companion for a midnight drive, for seldom did he speak, except to urge on the willing horses.

By a strange fatality Everard Ainslie had taken the same road over which Claude Clinton had passed but three hours ahead of him, and, as a turn in the highway brought him in full view of the old ivy-grown church, he started, flushed, and paled vividly, although he little knew what a ghastly object lay within its dark portals.

"Yes, 'tis the very same. From yonder church I wandered forth in life. Where shall I end? half aloud said the young student, and then he cried:

"Hold on, driver!"

As the vehicle drew up Everard Ainslie sprang to the ground, and stood for a moment gazing upon the quaint old church, a feeling of awe creeping over him, as he glanced nervously upon the monuments of the dead.

Suddenly to his very feet fluttered a sheet of white paper, blown along by the wind.

Stooping he took it up, and seeing writing thereon, glanced closely upon it.

Instantly a cry escaped from his lips, and pressing his left hand to his breast, he staggered back, his face a mirror of conflicting emotions.

It was a large sheet of paper, fully twenty inches in length and eight in breadth—torn from a large book; it was the same sheet, crumpled and spotted with blood, which Claude Clinton had unknowingly dropped as he mounted his horse to fly from the scene of his cruel deed.

That stained record told the story—it told that upon a certain spring day, some four months before, Claude Clinton and Eve Ainslie had been bound in the holy bonds of wedlock, before the chancel of that dead-encircled church, by one who now lay stark and stiff in the sanctuary of his heavenly Master.

For a moment Everard Ainslie seemed like one dazed by his discovery, and then he muttered in a husky voice:

"In God's name! how can this have come here—and it is stained with blood—ha! Claude Clinton came this way."

"Yes, it was his act, to tear this from the book of records; yet, why this stain?"

"I fear, yet I know not what I fear, but thank God I hold this in my hands, for were he to possess it, I would be disowned and dishonored."

"Ha, ha, ha, Claude Clinton, I hold the winning hand!"

"You have tired of me, and would cast me off. Though flying for your life you came here to destroy this record; but I have it, and the stain upon it may one day bring you to the gallows."

"Well, I must on, and mayhap I may yet meet him, and—if I—do? But I'll not whisper that even to myself."

"Ha! I'll find out the secret of this red stain. Driver, await me here."

So saying, Everard Ainslie walked with determined step toward the ivy-green structure, placed his hand firmly upon the latch, but hesitated, shuddering as though a mortal fear was upon him.

Regaining his self-control, he entered the sacred edifice, and glanced timidly around the gloomy spot.

With faltering step he walked along the aisle until he stood within the chancel.

Not a sound broke the solemn silence, and it seemed like sacrilege to there intrude.

He had nerved himself, however, to the task, and was determined to proceed if the very specters of the dead arose before him.

Crossing the chancel he entered the vestry-room, and with a cry of horror started back.

There in the moonlight, his pale face upturned, his eyes open and staring a glassy stare, lay the poor rector.

Bounding forward, Everard Ainslie gave one look into the marble-like face, placed his hand upon the silent heart, and then, with a cry of mingled joy, sorrow, fright and despair, clutched at his head as if in frenzy, and rushed from the church.

Springing into the waiting vehicle he cried, in ringing tones:

"Drive on! for the love of God, drive on!"

Startled by the wild manner of the youth, the driver plied his whip and they seemed to fairly fly over the moon-lit road, and when the gray dawn of day broke in the east, the lonely church and its terrible secret were miles away—then, and then only, when the rosy tint of morn fell upon his face, did Everard Ainslie drive from him the horror that had grasped at his heart.

Arriving in the city, Everard sought an obscure hotel, dismissed his driver, and the college student was launched upon Destiny's highway, to tread the thorny path of life without one protecting hand stretched forth to guide from evil.

CHAPTER VIII.

BROTHER AND SISTER.

"DEAD! dead! and by the hand of my own brother."

"Oh, God! is there aught in this world for me now to live for?"

The speaker was a woman of rare loveliness

in face and form, although her features were stamped with an almost despairing sorrow.

She was attired in a loose morning-wrapper, that was most becoming to her, and was pacing to and fro, with a nervous tread, from one room into the other, for the door between the two was open.

The rooms were large, elegantly furnished, and most comfortable—the one a parlor, the other a bed-chamber.

A piano and a guitar, proved that the occupants were possessed of a musical taste, while numerous books scattered here and there showed literary amusements for idle hours.

In her hands, as she paced to and fro, the young girl, for she seemed scarcely more than eighteen, held a leathern wallet containing papers and bank-notes.

"This was taken from him after he fell, and brought to me—but what care I for these papers! they do not bring me back my poor slain Roslyn."

"Dead! can I realize that he is dead! that I shall never again touch his lips, his hand—that an open grave lies between us—a grave of my own brother's digging?"

"Oh! Clarence! Clarence! you deemed you were avenging your sister's honor—but you were crushing her to the earth in despair."

"Now the secret must be known—yes, I can tell it now, for he is dead; yes, I can make Clarence Erskine, brother though he is of mine, shrink with horror to know that he has killed, not my destroyer, but my husband!"

"Ay, Clarence Erskine, you have slain one who was innocent, and—yes, they say he faced death boldly; for why should he fear to die when his heart was unswayed?"

"Hail who can that be?" and the woman started, as a tap came upon the door.

A second time it was repeated; but she seemed to have lost all power of speech to bid the one without to enter; but stood staring at the closed portal, as though she expected to see some dread specter enter the room.

Then the door slowly opened, and with a cry of horror the woman recognized the man who entered.

It was the same tall, graceful form, the same earnest blue eyes that had faced Colonel Roslyn Roselle and sent him to his death.

It was Clarence Erskine, the brother of Florio—the avenger of a sister's honor.

Strangely alike were the two; but in the eyes of the sister there sparkled a fire almost kindled of hatred; in the eyes of the brother there was a look of intense sadness.

"Ha, ha, ha! Clarence Erskine! murderer, slayer of the guiltless, you have dared pollute this sacred spot with your presence!"

"Do you not fear that an avenging God will wither your own right hand, stained as it is with the blood of my husband?"

"Your husband!" gasped the man.

"Ay, Clarence Erskine—now I will tell you the truth; Roslyn Roselle was my husband, and you have slain him!"

"Away! away! How dare you contaminate this room with your presence?" and Florio pointed toward the door with a manner most threatening, a face clouded with the wildest passions.

"Florio, hear me—" began the brother, but the woman broke in with:

"What do you dare to palliate the wrong you have done me?"

"I dare tell you, Florio, that your name was bandied about, torn with dishonor, and that I sought an explanation from you, and you gave me none."

"I then went to Colonel Roselle, and his answer was that he had no explanation to make."

"Believing you yet innocent of wrong, and hoping to check you ere you were drawn over the brink of crime, I challenged Roslyn Roselle, for he would make me no promise never to see you again, and knowing his past life as I did, and remembering that a mystery hung about him which none could fathom, I was determined to end the unfortunate relations between you."

"To this end, to protect my sister from a designing villain, as I believed him to be, I was willing to risk my life against his."

"We met, and the result you know—Roslyn Roselle fell by my hand."

"Now, when too late, you tell me you were his wife, and I have the curse upon my life of his blood."

"Oh, Florio! Florio! this is awful!" and the brother raised his hands to his face and shuddered as bitter memory swept over him like a tidal wave of sorrow, desolating his life.

But, Florio stood like a statue, and no word escaping her lips, after a while Clarence Erskine continued:

"You sorrow for a husband, slain by a brother's hand, Florio; your heart will ache, but time will heal the wound, while I, my sister, will, as each year rolls by, but suffer more, for blood-stains wash not out; they stain the hand, the heart, the brain—hold! listen to me while I tell you that to-day I leave my father's house."

"I have ample means, ay, a generous income, and I will live apart from you—to-day our paths in life divide, for by my presence I will not continually bring up before you a phantom of your buried love, and I care not to sit constantly between you and the grim specter of death."

"But, Florio, I am still your brother, and our father is journeying toward the grave, and he is all you have to love you; yet, when he is gone, when you are left alone in the world, and you need a friend, a brother's love, come to me as in the olden time when you were my little sister."

"Cheer up, now, Florio; the grave has divided all who loved each other in the past—the grave will divide all who love each other in the future, Florio."

A moment more and he was gone; yet still Florio stood staring at the door, a grim smile upon her lips, a look of sorrow swelling up into her beautiful eyes.

CHAPTER IX.

JUST IN TIME.

ALONG a lovely country road, traversing the mountain district of New York State, rolled a traveling carriage, drawn by a pair of fine black horses, and driven by a colored coachman.

In the vehicle were two persons, an elderly gentleman, of perhaps fifty-five, with the bearing of a soldier, and a face full of nobleness and generosity, while his snow-white hair and mustache gave him an expression of almost womanly sweetness.

The person by his side was Florio Erskine; as beautiful as when the reader last beheld her, and yet a look of settled sadness upon her face which had not rested there four months before.

Clad in the deepest mourning, it was yet most becoming to her; but the sunshine of life was gone, and the horizon of her future was shadowed by clouds which were not tinged with a silver lining.

"Father, how long will it take us to reach our new home?" suddenly asked Florio, with a partly wearied look upon her lovely face.

"Perhaps two weeks, daughter, for you know we will not leave our carriage until we

reach Virginia; then Henry can come on alone, while we dash on by rail."

"And you think I shall like Wildside, as you call the estate, father?"

"Yes, Florio; it is one of the grandest old homes in the South, and as you know, belonged to an old army comrade of mine; but he ran through with his fortune after the death of his wife; the place was advertised for sale, and, remembering what it was, when I visited him twelve years ago, I purchased it, thinking it would be a delightful retreat for you, and where I could also forget the turmoil of the busy world."

"Therefore I had it put in thorough repair, refurnished and improved, and I know that we will both love Wildside."

"And Clarence! he will remain in the city, I suppose?"

It was the first time that Clarence Erskine had ever heard the name of her brother upon his daughter's lips since the fatal duel in which Clarence had slain Roslyn Roselle, and the father looked quickly toward her, and then said, after a moment's hesitation:

"Yes, Clarence will remain in the city, and practice his profession, in which he is certainly making a name—though why he should worry himself with the troubles of other people I know not, as his fortune, independent of what he has from me, is most generous."

"His conscience needs quieting—he must work, or—go mad," almost savagely said Florio; but, ere her father could reply, the vehicle came to a sudden halt; the horses swayed violently to one side; the crack of a pistol followed, and then came a half shriek of pain, a heavy fall, and two heavily-bearded faces peered into the carriage windows.

The sudden halt, the shot, the cry, together with the dark faces that bent upon her, caused Florio to faint away, just as her father leaned forward to draw his pistol from one of the carriage pockets, where he kept it in traveling.

But, the muzzle of a revolver was in his face, and a stern voice cried:

"Hold, old gentleman, for you have too many around you to play that game. Give us your gold, not lead, and be quick about it too, for we are not men to brook delay," said the man at the other window.

Feeling that the odds were against him, Colonel Erskine determined to yield, and said quietly:

"I have but little gold with me, but that I shall surrender at your demand."

"About how much, boss?" impudently asked the first speaker.

"Perhaps several hundred dollars."

"It won't do—come, boys, we'll take the girl, and when he wants to give a few thousand for her recovery, he can get her—"

"Hold! you would not take my daughter?" cried the fond father, horrified at the very thought.

"That's just what we would do, if she was your wife. We need money, boss."

As if to carry out his threat the speaker laid his hand heavily upon the unconscious Florio, when, suddenly, there came a cry of alarm from a third man, who was holding the horses.

Instantly both men at the carriage windows started back, the one to fall to the ground insensible from a blow upon the head from a heavy cane, the other to dart into the forest, quickly followed by his companion, who stood at the head of the horses.

Released of their restraint, the animals would have dashed away, and Colonel Erskine and his daughter might have been dragged to a horrible death; but a little form sprang to their bits and checked them, while the colonel sprang from the carriage to the aid of him who had proved himself the preserver of himself and Florio, and boldly came to their rescue at the risk of his own life.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 323.)

A SPRING SONG.

BY L. O. GREENWOOD.

The sun has chased the clouds away,
The birds have sung their morning lay,
The sky is clear and blue above,
And morning wakes mid smiles of love.

The buds are fresh with crystal dew,
The leaves display their shining hue,
And zephyrs sweet steal all around,
To kiss the trees and kiss the ground.

How glad some doth each heart rejoice,
A blithesome tone is in each voice,
The world is fair and now exhales
Sweet fragrance from both hills and vales.

The new-born flowers serene and sweet
Impart a joy to all who meet,
Their first soft smiles so full of grace,
That seem reflected on each face.

Then pour rich blessings from thy heart,
To God whom thou hast set apart,
And high above each habitation,
Of this great world with power not scant.

For all that's here for thee was made,
Thee in thy daily life to aid;
Labor's reward is ever good,
It brings peace, rest and daily food.

The Cross of Carlyon:

OR,

THE LADY OF LOCHWOOD.

A Romance of Baltimore.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK ORCHARD," "FLAMING TALISMAN," "RED SCORPION," "SILVER SERPENT," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

SOMEBODY MISSING.

THEY told me that I lay unconscious and raving during the balance of that night. The worthy doctor had another patient on his hands, and, very fortunately, he had a sachel of medicine with him.

It is a happy fact, that such frenzies of grief as mine do not, generally, culminate seriously. The rule being, rather, that, the greater the sorrow at first, the stronger the heart is afterward. The agony that knows no tears or outbursts, which lingers dread and weighty on the senses, while the only evidence of it is the weakened eye and ghastly cheek—this is most dangerous.

All night I lay moaning the name of Christabel, and tossing about in a wild delirium. Toward daylight I sunk into a profound sleep, affected, no doubt, by opiates. But, when the sun came pouring in through the windows, and I again opened my eyes to life, it was like the awakening from my usual slumbers; I was calm enough, with only a slight headache.

"Ah!" exclaimed the physician, "you are better?"

"Have I been very sick?"

"Um! Well, not so sick, after all."

These gentlemen of medicine always were ambiguous, somehow, in meeting a patient's inquiries. Mystification seems to be an indispensable part of their profession.

After a hearty breakfast, I was thoroughly myself. Naturally, I felt gloomy and thought-

ful—how else, with death in the house? And death, in this instance, seemed, truly, a tyrant.

But I was alive to necessary matters; and among my first thoughts was a sense of duty toward little Christabel. The child ought to be brought at once to take the last farewell of her mother.

What a blow it would be to her! Christabel, so young, so buoyant in all those ideal vigors which impart to childhood the sunniest of charms; only a few months since she had found and learned to love the beautiful woman who was her mother—now to lose her when she was dearest, when the cup of happiness was brimming and sparkling in the light of golden promises. It would be a delicate and difficult task to break the sad news to her; yet who to do it but myself?

There was no time to spare. Ordering out the buggy, I drove to the city on a double errand: to notify an undertaker, and in quest of the little orphan.

South Dallas street. Now that was an odd place for Meggy Merle to seek an abode in, when I knew Miss Christabel had given her considerable money, and lately accustomed her to living in magnificent surroundings. I wondered if she had dwelt there during the whole nine years of the child's life, and marvelled, if so, how little Christabel could have grown to that age, so chaste in person, habits and language. Not that Dallas street was a wicked place, nor yet such a filthy place; but, alas! generally, in a large city, are not desirable localities for people of even ordinary refinement.

Calling upon the undertaker, I then sought the rickety house where Meggy Merle had resided, when I delivered the letter a year or more prior. An aged colored woman met me at the door. She had occupied the house since Meggy left it; Meggy was not there now.

"Lor, marse!" she exclaimed, in answer to my questions, "is you a-lookin' for little Christabel?—w'at used to live heyr! Bress de chile! she's de sweetest honey ever was. I know'd her some, I did. But, dere: she done clear out long ago, an' got t'other side de world by dis time, I s'pects."

"Then you can't give me any information as to her whereabouts?"

"Deed I can't, sure."

"She has not returned here lately—say within a day or two?"

"Fo' de Lor! she ain't."

"I would very much like to find her."

"Is you her big brother?"

"No, but a very dear and anxious friend."

"I was not satisfied until making close and fruitless inquiries throughout the alley, north and south. Giving it up at last, I drove to the Sun office, and inserted the following:

"PERSONAL."

"MEGGY MERLE. Please return at once. You are greatly wanted at Lochwood. J. H."

But the day of the funeral went by without tidings of the absent ones. I exerted every available means, employing detectives in the hunt for Meggy Merle and little Christabel. The same condition of things continued.

I had not yet examined the black morocco diary, nor produced the will, nor set about adjusting Miss Christabel's business in final inventory. I now went to work, beginning with the diary.

My first discovery was the date of the birth of the benefactress, entered on the fly-leaf, thirty-nine years.

Was it possible she was that old—so much older than myself! And still so beautiful! But, why not! Aspasia was beautiful at the same age; Cleopatra was past thirty when she became the idol of her Antony; Diana de Poitiers was the most lovely woman of her court at thirty-six; Anne of Austria was the handsomest queen of Europe at thirty-eight; Mlle. Mars was at the zenith of triumphs, in beauty and as a tragedienne, after forty. My Christabel I thought more angelic than all, at thirty-nine.

Passing over this, I devoted myself to the strange history in the diary—the detail of a woman's love, wrongs and martyrdom, a man's deceit and heartless perfidy. All her mysteries faded away, all her terrors stood forth; I learned, then, who and what she was, and how deeply she had been sinned against. Each paragraph increased my sympathy, until, in the solitude of that library, when none but the All-seeing Eye could see, the tears trickled down my cheeks. No wonder that her heart had turned to stone.

At the close of the singular chronicle, ensued later events: her meeting me, what we did together, her plans concerning me—all of the latter completely, generally fulfilled. I then noticed that there had been no jottings in the diary for quite a while, and studying for a moment, I recollected the date as being that night when I saw her in such trepidation, on the occasion of her second visit to the vaults, after our occupancy of Lochwood manse. An enigmatic entry, too, as follows:

Night of—th. . . All things have their ending. Trapped the weight of sin, and sealed her way up forever. Wretched being! her task has ended in a retribution she little expected. Now, one thing more—my—Christabel—and Christabel Carlyon—the Cross of Carlyon—has triumphed at last."

By previous allusions in the diary, my curiosity was satisfied as to who this Lizard was—the object in gray, which encountered us on the night of our memorable first visit to the vaults of Lochwood—and as to the part she played in the tangled events of Miss Christabel's sufferings.

Closing the diary, I procured a lantern and sought the vaults. It was tedious, breaking the cement round the monstrous door; but, everybody was abed and asleep, I worked leisurely, and soon broke through. I felt no fear whatever; the mystery of the haunted vaults was explained.

Waving my lantern, I moved ahead and arrived at the door of the chamber in which Miss Christabel had once shown me the document bearing the bloody cross. The Cross of Carlyon, also explained in the course of her private history.

The vaulted cell was provided now with a stout door. The door was locked, with the key outside.

My hand trembled as I turned the key and the knob, and stepped in; then I recoiled instantly, for my nostrils were greeted by an odor so offensive that I nearly fainted. Two things I had seen, however, in the momentary flash of the lantern.

At the far side of the cell lay a wasted human figure, almost a skeleton, so hideous to look upon that I refrain from describing it. The second item was a slip of paper directly at my feet, as if it had been pushed beneath the door and never disturbed afterward.

Securing this paper, I hastened away from the sepulchral depths, and confess that I breathed freer when again in the comfortable library. By the light of the large lamp I read these lines:

"Whoever may find in this vault a skeleton, may know that it is the remains of one who, for thirty-five years, assisted in a plot to defraud the orphaned and friendless. A heartless creature in the employ of heartless men, who caused the death and

degradation of that orphan. In this cell, where she had guarded so long that which was wrenched from the victim, she found atomb, whence her soul alone could escape to answer the charge of crime that dyes the books of Heaven!"

Poor, poor Miss Christabel. Was she insane! I had never detected it. But, if she was, I could not blame her for this deed. What she had endured was sufficient to craze her, and in her insanity, no wonder she had wreaked a terrible vengeance on the Lizard.

I called in workmen next day to have the vault doors re-sealed, doubly secured, for I wished to hide forever from the world the secret beyond.

My next movement was to enter the will, which was found strictly to be as she said; everything to little Christabel, with me as sole executor and trustee, until the heir came of age. Ah! where was that heir to be found? Here was a task ahead of me.

Discharging the servants, the doors and windows of Lochwood were closed by my own hands. I arranged the business of the estate in a condensed manner, and then went out to hunt over the earth for Christabel Carlyon, the heir of Lochwood.

All of this happened fifteen years ago.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LADY IN THE CAB.

Toward the close of Indian Summer, 1874—beautiful Indian Summer, when the flowers were nodding farewell, and the last soft spice-breath of roses floated in the air; when the birds sung louder, and the broad earth looked gay in its final struggle before the dews were frost; when hues and hues were blending, and the brown chestnuts rattled among the fallen leaves; when the morn was haze of gold, and the evenings bright with stars; surely, it was such a scene, in such a clime, that inspired the sweet song of "The Last Rose"—a season unknown in the almanacs of the old world!

Baltimore fashionables availed themselves bounteously of this pure weather; the streets and drives were thronged, and costly apparel here and there indicated that some, at least, had money to spend, notwithstanding the extraordinary dullness of business affairs.

Our interest lies at Camden Station, an hour or so before dusk. The early evening train from Washington had arrived with tolling bell, passengers were hurrying toward the gate—and among the streaming passengers, one whom we must note.

A lady of slender figure, neatly dressed, who wore a veil arranged just enough aside to expose a beautiful brunette face, with black, starry eyes that sparkled in the dim light of the lamps around. She was alone.

Stepping out at the front of the station, she engaged a cabman from amid the host that shouted and flourished their whips. In a few minutes she was riding toward the north of the city—then the cab struck the Harford road. On, on it went, the driver sitting like a statue in the drawing darkness, while he counted upon the ample fare he was to receive.

Presently he reined up, and glanced inside through the front window.

"What'd you say was the name o' the place?"

"Lochwood."

"All right;" and as he drove on again he mumbled: "Must 'a' been before I 'gan drivin' in Baltimore, I reckon, as I never heerd o' no such place out this-a-way. Say, mister—to a man whom he overtook, plodding wearily along the roadside—"how far to Lochwood?"

"First lane to the left after Joppa."

"Old Joppa pike."

"Who's he?"

"Must be green, I guess. Don't know the old stage road?"

"Oh! Thankee."

The cab soon passed the pike and entered the lane. Dark, dismal and rugged it was, and a second time the driver paused.

"Say, mum: think this here's the place?"

"Is it Lochwood?"

"I reckon. This's the first lane after Joppa. But there ain't no lights up to the house, an' it's sort of a cut-throat route, anyway."

"Go on."

"All right, mum."

Slowly over the weed-grown carriage path, winding through the aisle of spectral trees and growing shadows. Even in the dim light of the growing moon, it was plain to be seen that the place was deserted.

At the crumbling porch the occupant of the cab alighted. But she paused and looked slowly around.

"Lochwood! Is this Lochwood?"

"Reckon so, mum. Don't appear to be anybody livin' here, mum."

She ascended the steps and tried the door; then descended and glanced up at the grim front. All was black and silent as the grave. The driver cast furtive and uneasy looks about him; the horses pawed with unrest.

"Isn't that a light off there?" she asked, pointing through the trees.

"Yes, mum; on the road, further up."

"We'll go there."

"Anywhere you says, mum."

They went back over the tangled lane, and soon reached the front of a tasteful cottage a little beyond. A dog barked as the driver halted, but a woman presently answered the call.

"Is there anyone living at Lochwood?"

"At Lochwood! Why, bless your heart! it's been tenanted these fifteen years, ever since the strange lady died."

"The strange lady?"

"She as owned it."

"Oh! And there was a gentleman used to live there, I believe?"

"Mr. Harrison, you mean. Yes, well, he's not been seen since that time either. And I really can't say where you'll find him. He was the lady's manager, you know; and I bought this cottage of him, after he had improved it some. My last payment was due soon after the good lady died, and I went to his usual office in Baltimore. But, bless you! the office was closed, he was clean gone, nobody knew where, and I haven't made the payment yet."

"Was you wanting to see him, Miss?"

"I would like to see him—yes, very much."

"Well, I'm really sorry. I'd like to get sight of him myself."

"Good night"—and to the driver: "Back to the city, now."

"Yes, mum. Where to?"

"Some large warehouse and book store."

"That's Taylor's."

"Go there, then."

Taylor's, at Sun building, generally closed shortly after dark, and in order to please his customer, the cabman plied his whip smart and fast, in hopes of reaching the place in time—which he succeeded in doing. They were just winding down the iron blinds as the cab wheeled up at the curb.

"Wait for me, driver," and with this she hastened into the store, where she asked the obliging clerk for a daily newspaper.

"Which one, Miss?"

THE STORY OF MOLL PITCHER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

During the famous Revolution
A woman did such execution
At Monmouth, fighting the Britishers,
That a never-dying name is hers.

A cannonier was her husband then
When he was killed in the fray,
But she wouldn't give up the cannon or
The cannon near she stood all day,
And loaded it up and fired away.
But worse than all the balls she sent
Was the way that she for the Britishers went
With her tongue, to their consternation;
It was two-edged, and very keen.
Being re-sharpened for this terrible scene,
And 'twas very plain that she was a queen
In the art of conversation.

Above the din her voice was heard,
And the cannon didn't drown a word;
She raved them by file and platoon,
By section and by division,
And her words like shells among them exploded
With heavy abuse and Greek fire loaded,
Which the British harrowed and goaded—
And she'd plenty of ammunition.
It rattled around the heads and ears
Of even the bravest grenadiers,
It took them there upon every side
Till they couldn't endure the volley.
"Storm that woman!" the general cried,
Their blankets over their ears they tied
And charged, but ah, it was folly!
Her mouth they said was a mitrailleuse
And the terrible storm of rilled abuse
About their ranks was beating
Her strong words cracked them over the head
In such a way their noses bled;
They halted at once, "We'll be killed," they
said.

And so set in to retreating.
Then the general called a council of war,
And said, "I've traveled both near and far
And fought in many a battle,
But I never saw such a fusillade,
And men of iron could never have staid
To face such a terrible rattle.
I'll put it down in the rules of war
That such a thing is unhuman,
And I'll tell you this—I'd rather die
In open battle than again to try
To spike the mouth of a woman."

And so they went away no richer
By the efforts they made to break that Pitcher.

Disenchanted.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"Broken your engagement?"
Madge Amory echoed the words with such
genuine surprise that Edith smiled amusedly—
fair, stately Edith Grosvenor, with her lily face
lighted by such grand black eyes, soft as
velvet.

"Broken my engagement, Madge; and I can
assure you Dr. Belmont is just as well satisfied
as I am."

Madge flung a navy blue velvet band im-
patiently on the dressing-case, her cheeks flushing,
her blue eyes looking unutterable reproach and
vexation.

"I do declare, Edith, I've no patience with
you! What on earth could have possessed you
to throw Leslie Belmont over—such a perfectly
splendid fellow as he is, and the handsomest
man in the world, I do believe, and such a
grand reputation as he is gaining in his profes-
sion, and the fortune he is sure to make,
and the way he worships you, you heartless
fiend!"

Madge's mingled indignation at Miss Gros-
venor's course of action, and her ardent uphold-
ing of Dr. Belmont's flag, were certainly very
graceful and pretty; and Edith parted her
handsome, haughty lips in an indulgent smile.

"Child, I am not to blame, for all I broke the
engagement. Dr. Belmont is entirely to
blame; he insisted on my giving up my pet
values and opinions on certain subjects. You
know what I think about women's rights, dear;
and of course I told my handsome doctor that
neither he nor any other man need expect to
obtain such absolute control over me that my
most cherished opinions should yield to him
and his opinions. Of course, a rupture nat-
urally followed an animated discussion, and—
the rest, *vous voyez*."

Edith's countenance was as calm as a summer
sky; but Madge—Madge buzzed like an en-
raged fire-fly.

"Yes, I do know the rest. Disgraceful as it
is, I think you are the most egregious—well,
the most foolish girl it ever has been my luck
to come across, Edie." And the bright blue
eyes came to a sudden prolonged stare on Miss
Grosvenor's statuesque face.

"Edie, do you know what I believe? I
solemnly believe Horace Aymler is at the bot-
tom of this."

A swift scarlet tinge fled over Miss Gros-
venor's face, like a rosy sunrise shadow over a
snowy landscape.

"Yes! Why do you think so?"

She asked it very sweetly.

"Because Mr. Aymler and you are in such
sympathy on this nasty suffrage question—be-
cause Mr. Aymler is just as jealous of Dr. Bel-
mont as he knows how to be—because you are
an heiress, and your fortune of a hundred
thousand dollars would not come amiss to him
—because—"

Miss Grosvenor lifted a jeweled forefinger
imperiously.

"No more, please, Madge. Mr. Aymler is,
as you say, in sympathy with me. More, Mr.
Aymler is, in my estimation, a gentleman who
despises fortune-hunting; and more than all,
last night I accepted Mr. Aymler as my be-
trothed husband."

Her nostrils were dilating like those of a
thorough-bred, and she held her head up with
the defiant grace of a stag. And Madge—
Madge collapsed pitifully.

"Oh, Edith Grosvenor! Is it possible?
What will Dr. Belmont think when he hears?"

Edith picked up her silver-backed hand-mir-
ror, and examined her pretty arching brows
critically.

"What Dr. Belmont thinks has ceased to be a
matter of interest to me. Madge, stay to lun-
cheon, like a good child, and we'll have a drive
afterward."

Mr. Horace Aymler sat in his room at the
Albermarle Hotel, looking down at the surging
crowds that were passing up and down Broad-
way, and occasionally turning toward a spec-
tacular young man who was quietly reading an
afternoon edition of the news.

Suddenly Aymler sprang from his chair.
"Carlie, that is she—that is Miss Grosvenor,
on the other side—the lady in black velvet and
silk. Isn't she magnificent?"

His face was not as enthusiastic in expres-
sion as his words, and Mr. Carlie looked half
sarcastically over his paper.

"Really it is too much trouble to move, Ay-
mler, or I would be happy to endorse your esti-
mate of your betrothed. I dare say you are in
duty bound to call her magnificent, seeing that
she has been fond—and foolish—enough to be-
queath her fortune unqualifiedly to you, as a
proof, you say, of her implicit confidence in
you."

Aymler stroked his dark, curling beard.
"Miss Grosvenor is a remarkably sensible
young lady, Carlie, for all I must confess, con-
fidentially, I can't approve of her taste in turn-

ing the cold shoulder to Belmont. Miss Gros-
venor is a Godsend to me, as unexpected as
necessary, for, as I can tell you, old boy, I had
not the remotest idea she'd have come."

Carlie folded his paper lazily.

"And I dare say, as usual, your exchequer
needs replenishing, and your wife's money will
do it. Only, Aymler, it strikes me that a wo-
man so generous and trusting as Miss Grosve-
nor has shown herself deserves, at least, some
return of affection from you. And I know
you do not love her, or any one, but that little
blue-eyed angel who is even poorer than
yourself."

Aymler frowned and flushed.

"Never mention Etta Emerson's name to
me, Carlie, unless you want to see me com-
mit suicide. It is the one task of my life to
try to forget her. Forget her! as if her blue
eyes will not be forever looking into mine!"

"Pleasant for Miss Grosvenor, that."

Carlie stretched himself with lazy grace,
not taking notice of the pallor Aymler could
not banish from his face.

Then came a rap on the door, and a hotel
messenger handed a note to Aymler, who opened
it, half apprehensively.

"There is no answer."

He gave the fellow a quarter, then sat down
in a chair beside the table.

"From Edith. A telegram was handed her
a moment after she passed here, bidding her go
at once to Virginia, where a friend is dying.
She bids me adieu for a few days."

His eyes were shining as lovers' eyes never
shine at the prospect of a separation from their
sweethearts. Carlie laughed.

"Old fellow, as if I can't read you like a
book! You are going to enjoy Miss Grosvenor's
absence with little blue-eyed Etta—to forget
whom is the Herculean task of your life.
Aymler, you're a rogue."

"Granted—but only for a few days, remem-
ber."

"Annette!"

Miss Grosvenor's voice was low, and very
sweet, for all the undertone of physical pain in
the one name she called, that was answered in
a flash by the trim maid who appeared from a
distant window.

"The bathing, Annette. And tell me what
time it is. I feel ever so much better to-day.
Don't I look as if I would be able to be around
in a day or so?"

Annette was deftly bathing a big ugly bruise
on Miss Grosvenor's white forehead.

"You look a hundredfold better, Miss Edith.
No one would believe to see you to-day that
you were picked up for dead the day of the col-
lision—actually left to yourself, because those
wonderful smart doctors said the living needed
care. It makes my blood curdle when I think
of it."

A slight nervous tremor made Edith shiver;
then she smiled.

"There is no use thinking of it. It seems
strange to me when I try to imagine how de-
lighted they will be at home when I return,
safe and sound, after the telegram you sent
them, saying I was killed."

The tears were hanging like dew-drops on
Edith's long lashes. She was thinking of Hor-
ace Aymler—and their meeting; picturing his
keen, rapturous delight; and—away down in
the very depths of her woman's heart, wonder-
ing how Dr. Belmont took the dreadful news.

Then, some one summoned Annette from the
hotel office; and ten minutes later, she came
rushing back, beaming with delight.

"Miss Edith—Miss Edith! what do you
think? If Dr. Belmont hasn't come all the way
from New York, expecting to have the mourn-
ful satisfaction of escorting your remains home
—and—he's that pale and trembly since he's
heard you're alive that he can hardly stand. Do
let him come up—do, Miss Edith—more shame
to Mr. Aymler that he didn't come."

Edith flushed hotly.

"Annette—be careful! You may show Dr.
Belmont up. His professional knowledge will
be of service, at least."

And, grave, paler than the woman among the
pillows of the lounge, Leslie Belmont bowed
over the one love of his life—but made no sign;
then, nor in the after days, when, by short,
easy stages the home journey was performed;
when his skillful, tender care made strange
breaks in Edith's calm peace; when his
grave, handsome face was a study to her that
never failed to disturb her.

It was just dusk when the coach rolled up to
the door of Edith's home, where lights brightly
gleaming in the drawing-room windows seemed
to make a welcome for her.

"I know what it means," she said, turning
her eyes to Dr. Belmont's face. "I can see
through the window—Horace is there—"

She turned the latch-key softly, motioning Leslie to
follow her; and side by side they crossed the
velvet-carpeted hall to the parlors, where sounds
of voices came suddenly to their ears—Mr.
Aymler's first.

"I tell you there is not the slightest use of
prating to me about the looks of it, Mr. Ash-
ley. You are the lawyer who drew up Miss
Grosvenor's will, and you know she left every-
thing, most unqualifiedly, to me. I choose to
take possession at once, and that's the end of it."

Edith's fingers suddenly tightened on Dr.
Belmont's wrist—a touch that thrilled him
through and through.

"But such haste is indecent, Mr. Aymler—
outrageously indecent. Without a doubt you are
owner of this mansion and all it contains, and
the remainder of Miss Grosvenor's estate—but,
in the name of humanity and decency, for the
sake of the lady you loved—"

Aymler's laugh interrupted the earnest appeal
of the old family lawyer.

"Come! now, Ashley, that's rich! An old
fellow like you prating of love. Do you really
suppose for a moment I cared for Edith Gros-
venor? No, sir! It was her money—and I've
got it, safe and sound, without any encum-
brance. Ashley, transfer the bonds and stocks
to my name, and give me whatever loose cash
there is in the bank. I'm going to furnish
afresh at once—consulting Miss Emerson's
taste; and in less than a month you'll see the
happiest married folks you ever came across."

His gay, bantering tone was peculiarly re-
pellant, under the circumstances, and Edith
drew her figure proudly up in wrath and dis-
gust. Then, with a little sudden moan, she
dropped her hold of Leslie's hand.

"Dr. Belmont! how you must pity and de-
spise me!" Her complaint was hardly off her
lips when he had caught her hands in his.

"Edith! It is only love—great, undying
love I feel! Edith! can you let all the mis-
erable past three months pass—and let me begin
where I left off that blessed September night?
Edith, tell me you love me!"

One second of pride battling with the true
love that had only been sleeping; and Edith
lifted her lips to his.

"Leslie! oh, thank God for this! Leslie! my
own, own darling!"

And then she threw open the drawing-room
door, radiant, flushed, smiling.

"I am too sorry to interfere in all your de-

lightful little plans, Mr. Aymler, but, really, I
am obliged to Mr. Ashley! dear, dear old
friend—tell me how glad you are it was all a
hideous mistake about my being killed." Then,
turning to Aymler again, who stood like a petri-
fied corpse, she bestowed one of her most be-
witching smiles on him. "I mean a fortunate
mistake. Leslie, will you ring for Jonas to
show Mr. Aymler out? Mr. Ashley, you shall
remain for dinner and a pleasant evening, for I
want you and my future husband to arrange
several matters for me to-night. Jonas—the
door! don't be terrified; it is really I—Mr.
Aymler, I wish you a very good evening!"

And with a sweeping bow, the very quin-
tessence of mockingly elaborate courtesy, she
dismissed the speechless, crestfallen man from
her house, from her life forever.

A Persecuted Man.

BY EREN E. REXFORD.

"It's a widow," groaned Mr. Bumble—Tim-
othy Bumble, bachelor, from Spadunk; evi-
dently Mr. Bumble hadn't any special love for
widows. "Here am I—an unsuspecting, inno-
cent man, invited to come down visiting my
brother John, and like a fool, I came down.
Hardly do I step foot inside the door before I'm
told that there's some one else coming—a widow
—Belinda's dearest friend—and such a nice
woman, and I see through it all in a minute.
It's a plot! They've got me down here for her
to marry!"

Mr. Bumble broke out in a cold sweat at the
idea.

"And now she's here," went on Mr. Bumble,
shaking his fist at something in the corner—an
imaginary widow, perhaps. "She's here, and
I'll be persecuted and pestered from morning
till night. She knows, of course, that John
and his wife are willing to help her along in
her wickedness. I wish—Mr. Bumble began
to wax eloquent in his earnestness—"I wish
there was a law abolishing widows."

John came in pretty soon. "Are you
ready?" he asked.

"Yes, I suppose so," answered his brother.
"But I tell you what it is, John, I won't marry
her!"

"Maybe she wouldn't have you," laughed
John.

"You can't cram that down my throat," ex-
claimed Mr. Bumble, explosively. He followed
his brother down like a lamb led to the sacri-
fice. He remembered afterward of seeing
something in the shape of a woman rise up as
they entered the parlor, and hearing John say
something. Then the shape swooped down
upon him like a hawk upon a dove, and for ten
minutes thereafter all was blank to him.

When he regained his scattered senses—it al-
ways affected him in this way to be introduced
to women, especially widows—he found him-
self sitting before her with meekly folded
hands, while she was talking away at a fearful
rate. She was strong-minded, he discovered,
with a cold shiver of foreboding. Nothing
cooing or dove-like about her.

"I do think," vociferated Mrs. Blake, laying
her hand on Mr. Bumble's knee, by way of em-
phasis—"I do think that my poor women
have rights that you men are bound to respect.
Don't you?" Mrs. Blake turned her eagle eyes
full on Mr. Bumble, as if defying and daring
him to deny it.

"Undoubtedly," admitted Mr. Bumble, faint-
ly.

"Yes, undoubtedly," repeated Mrs. Blake.
"You show good sense in making that admis-
sion, and I like you for it."

Mr. Bumble regretted that he had made it.
"Dear!" exclaimed the poor man that night.
"I'm afraid she'll get me cornered up and mar-
ry me yet."

His sleep was haunted with widows. One
leaned down the headboard to pull his hair, and
one shook her fist at him from the footboard,
while one leaned over the bed and requested
him to kiss her. Not another wink of sleep did
he get that night.

"Oh, Mr. Bumble," cried the widow at break-
fast, "there's a lovely view from the hill, Be-
linda says. I want you to come and show it
to me."

"I'm in for it, I'm afraid," he groaned.
"She'll propose before we get back. She be-
lieves in rights. Maybe proposing is one of
'em. If she should propose, I know I wouldn't
dare to say no."

Oh, that walk! Every hour was a week long.
His courage began to revive as the distance be-
tween him and the house grew less.

Suddenly Mrs. Blake got frightened at a
cow.

"She won't hurt you," averred Mr. Bumble.
"She'll boss, shoot!"

The animal didn't shoot but came nearer.

"Oh," shrieked Mrs. Blake, flinging her arms
about the poor, unprotected man. "Save me."

"You old brute!" Let us hope, for the sake
of the bachelor's gallantry, that he referred to
the cow and not the widow. "You old brute!"
glared off with you, and he succeeded in put-
ting the cow to rout.

"How shall I repay you?" sobbed the widow.
"My lifelong gratitude is yours."

"Don't!" said the bachelor, evidently greatly
touched. "Tain't worth speaking of. You're
welcome."

"I feel faint; I'll have to lean on you," sighed
the widow, and he had to help her home. He
expected she'd try to faint and fall into his
arms every minute, but he hurried her over the
ground at such a rapid rate that she hadn't
time to.

getting desperate, he thought, as he
reviewed the events of the day; "a widow'll
bring things to a crisis in no time."

The next night there was a party. Mr. Bum-
ble had to see the widow home. But it wasn't
because he wanted to. He tried hard enough
to shirk the duty, and was detected by his
brother sneaking off round the corner and
brought back to the widow.

"It reminds me of a night when Mr. Blake
walked home with me before we were mar-
ried," said the widow, and gave signs of being
about to dissolve in tears. Mr. Bumble could
stand anything but that.

"I'd like to have you come up to Spadunk,"
he burst out, at a loss what to say, and so say-
ing the first thing that popped into his head.

"Would you?" said the widow, clinging
closer than a brother. "I would like to come
up and see you. I might stay for life."

"There! I've put my foot in it this time,"
thought the poor man. "It's coming!"

"Dear me; what have I said?" cried the wi-
dow. "I'm so impulsive. What can you
think of me?"

Mr. Bumble tried to say something, but the
words stuck in his throat and produced a rum-
ble like distant thunder.

"You wish I would? Was that what you
said?" asked the widow. "Dear me!"

"I—I didn't say so!" responded the bache-
lor, despairingly. "You misunderstood me,
ma'am."

He tried to shake her off at the parlor-door,

when they got home, but she coaxed him in
while he was cursing himself for letting her do
it; and there he sat and suffered for three mor-
tal hours. More than once he thought the aw-
ful moment had come, but something—Provi-
dence, he called it—helped to avert the fate
which must have been his if she had spoken,
and he congratulated himself when he reached
his chamber that he was spared to freedom yet
a little longer.

He went to bed and dreamed. He thought
Mrs. Blake came and informed him that she
was going to marry him at half-past ten to-
morrow. He woke in a clammy perspiration.
It was terribly real. Then he dreamed that he
ran away to avoid her, but she followed him,
and put her arms about his neck and hugged
him, saying: "Oh, you foolish man! To think
you could get away from a widow when she'd
made up her mind to marry you!" and then she
fell to kissing him.

He got up and dressed himself.

"I won't stay under this roof another night,"
he declared. "It ain't safe."

Ten minutes after some one knocked at
John's door.

"I'm going home," exclaimed Mr. Bumble.
"Train goes in fifteen minutes. Good-by."

"But, Timothy—"

"Tain't no use! I wouldn't stay for any-
thing. I'm going," and he was off.

"You look all beat out," declared his old
housekeeper on his arrival at home.

"I be," said he. "I tell you what 'tis, Bet-
sey, I ain't going away from home again till I
know it's safe. I've been persecuted! If any
women come here tell 'em I'm dead, or gone
West, or got the small-pox, but don't you let
'em in."

Mr. Bumble confidently expected the widow
would follow him. But she didn't. He hasn't
been out of Spadunk since that time. He
doesn't think it safe to do so.

THE WOODLAND GRAVE.

BY MARIE S. LADD.

It lies beneath a bed of moss
And deep blue violets weave their silken floss,
And blue blue violets run across.

If pale-face there, or Indian brave
Rest 'neath the fretted architrave,
In what is called the lonely grave,

We know not; and we only know
A life, by death's harsh overthrow,
Now lies above, that lived below.

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE PROFESSIONAL ARENA.

The first month of the Centennial year cam-
paign has ended, and the opening contests have
been model exhibitions of the beauties of the Na-
tional Game, as a general thing poorly played
games having been the exception. The four lead-
ing clubs of the League Association out west, have
encountered each other, and out of the fight
Chicago and Cincinnati have appeared with fly-
ing colors, the former clutching the laurels. In
the east here the Mutuals and Hartforders have
stepped in the van, the new Boston team fall-
ing below the anticipated mark as the appended
record up to May 1st shows. The east and
west will not meet to play together until June,
except so far as one club is concerned, the New
Haven taking a trip west on May 15th.

The April record of League pennant con-
tests includes the appended model games, viz.:
games won by nine runs and less. We give
them in the order of the smallest score:

April 25, Cincinnati vs. St. Louis, at Cincinnati. 2-1
" 26, Hartford vs. Boston, at Boston (10 in 3). 3-1
" 27, Chicago vs. Louisville, at Louisville. 4-0
" 28, Cincinnati vs. St. Louis, at Cincinnati. 5-2
" 29, St. Louis vs. Louisville, at Louisville. 6-2
" 30, Boston vs. Athletic, at Philadelphia. 6-3
" 31, Boston vs. Mutual, at Brooklyn. 6-6
" 1, Mutual vs. Hartford, at Brooklyn. 8-3

The averages of the League pennant series
for April is 7 and 5 over for the winning nines,
and 2 and 7 over for the losing. This is the
best opening month's average on record.

The regular record, showing how the clubs
stand, in won and lost games with each other,
is as follows:

Clubs.

Athletic..... 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 1
Boston..... 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 2
Chicago..... 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 3
Cincinnati..... 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 2
Hartford..... 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 6
Louisville..... 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0
Mutual..... 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 1
St. Louis..... 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 1

Games lost..... 1 2 0 1 1 3 1 2 11

All but the Chicago nine have lost single
games up to the close of April.

The other League club contests—all marked
by double figures—are as follows:

April 24, Athletic vs. Boston, at Philadelphia. 20-3
" 27, Chicago vs. Louisville, at Louisville. 10-0
" 29, Chicago vs. Cincinnati, at Cincinnati. 11-5

On May 1st the following games were played,
but one of which was a League pennant con-
test.

May 1, Hartford vs. Boston, at Hartford. 15-3
" 1, Athletic vs. Philadelphia, at Phila. 11-9
" 1, Athletic vs. New Haven, at Brooklyn. 8-2

On the 2d of May the following games took
place:

May 2, Cincinnati vs. Chicago, at Cincinnati. 15-9